



Newsletter

April 15 & July 15, 2006

President's Message

Summer is here and the heat is ON!. I hope everybody has had a great spring. As the season moves forward, I recommend that everybody take a little time to reflect whether more can be done to improve your business this year.

At Michigan Aquaculture 2006, I gave a brief State of the Industry Address. For those that missed it, it began something like this:

The 2005 fiscal year for the State's Aquaculture Industry is relatively unchanged from 2005, 2004, 2003, ... This is a somewhat similar situation to other NCR states with the exception of one - Ohio. Ohio's recent increase in revenues from aquaculture products was 17%; total sales reached ~ \$5.3million, and licensed farmers have increased from 33 to 200. In large part this success can be attributed to a line item congressional bill resulting in \$\$\$\$ federal dollars for Ohio aquaculture, which was \$900K this past year alone.

We have all heard this before, but the figures are out there: aquaculture remains one of the fastest growing segments of agriculture in the world. Yet the industry here in Michigan is not moving forward. So, what needs to be done, and by whom? The "whom" part of this question is easy. MAA members (you and I), and fellow industry supporters are the only individuals who can improve the status of Michigan Aquaculture. The "what" is a bit trickier, and will be the focus of my work for MAA through the term of my office.

Sustainability, which was the theme of Michigan Aquaculture 2006, is a key factor. By the way, I give many thanks to all of you who attended, to our speakers, and to the program committee. I hope everybody came away with the message that sustainability is not just an environmental issue. In order to be successful, sustainable aquaculture practices must continually (every day, month, and year) strive to integrate a complexity of environmental, economic, political, and social factors.

Simply becoming an MAA member is a great start, but frequent communication and our ability to work collectively provides the framework for success of the industry. For those of you with access to the internet, MAA has an electronic forum called **michaqua**. This can be joined by going to the website: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/michaqua/>. Let's keep this site active and communicate! Also, anyone with email addresses – please send me an email so I can develop a current electronic mailing list for posting information and discussions: weekschr@msu.edu.

For those of you not on the internet, check in with Bob, Russ, Steve, Robert, myself, or other MAA member when you have a chance (see current officers at end of this newsletter).

I now propose a task for all of us to work on. We are currently looking to develop a set of objectives aimed at improving the production potential of the industry. Please pass on all suggestions ASAP so we can examine how to put your ideas into action.

We are going to have a bi-annual meeting this summer. Our plans are to meet up at the Jordan River National Fish Hatchery for $\frac{3}{4}$ of a day on August 22th. We hope to have a quick MAA business discussion, tour, and potential fish health seminar by FWS.

Lastly, but certainly not the least, I would like to give a very special thanks to Rick Weidenhamer for his dedication to MAA and the baitfish and aquaculture industries of Michigan. Rick is an exemplifying individual and great friend. A go to guy for sure!

Chris Weeks

Mark your Calendar's

MAA Bi-Annual Meeting



JORDAN RIVER NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY USFWS

Date: August 22, 2006

Location:

Jordan River National Fish Hatchery
6623 Turner Road
Elmira, MI 49730
Phone: 231-584-2461
<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/JordanRiver/>

Access to the hatchery is from US-131 at Turner Road, just north of Alba, Michigan.

Agenda:

- 10 - Noon: MAA Business Meeting
- 12 - 1 PM: Lunch
- 1PM - 2 PM: Tour of facilities
- 2 PM - 4 PM: FWS fish health training

Cost: FREE

Please RSVP either Chris W. or Bob B. by August 17th on your attendance

CVM Update (June 23, 2006)

Reminder To Aquaculture Producers About The Use Of Formaldehyde

FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) has received reports that some aquaculture producers are using chemical grade formaldehyde as a parasiticide drug for their fish. The use of the chemical grade product is not approved by CVM. Using a formaldehyde compound other than the approved product can be unsafe for fish and the effectiveness of an unapproved compound is questionable. CVM would like to remind aquaculture producers to read veterinary drug labels carefully and follow label directions to help avoid causing illegal residues in their products.

There are three drug sponsors with approved new animal drug applications for formaldehyde including: Western Chemical, PARASITE-S (NADA 140-989), Argent Chemical Laboratories, Inc., Paracide-F (NADA 140-831), and Natchez Animal Supply Company, Formalin-F (NADA 137-687).

Parasite-S and Formalin-F are approved for the control of:

- * external protozoa (Chilodonella, Costia, Epistylis, Ichthyophthirius, Scyphidia, and Trichodina spp.) and the monogenetic trematodes (Cleidodiscus, Dactylogyrus, and Gyrodactylus spp.) on all finfish,
- * fungi of the family Saprolegniaceae on all finfish eggs, and
- * protozoan parasites (Bodo, Epistylis, and Zoothamnium spp.) on penaeid shrimp.

Paracide-F is approved for the control of:

- * external protozoa and monogenetic trematodes (as above) on salmon, trout, catfish, largemouth bass, and bluegill, and
- * fungi (as above) on salmon, trout, and esocid eggs.

Paracide-F is not currently approved for use on penaeid shrimp.

The sponsors of the above drugs have approved

applications filed with the Agency and have demonstrated that their products are safe and effective for the approved uses. Approved formaldehyde products are manufactured to strict good manufacturing practices (GMP) standard that ensures their quality, purity and strength. The specifications ensuring these attributes are tightly controlled. The standards by which approved formaldehyde and chemical grade formaldehyde is manufactured are different. Aquaculture producers are producing food for human consumption and should be mindful of these considerations. They should not use the chemical grade formaldehyde in place of these approved products.

Any questions about the use of formaldehyde in aquaculture may be directed to Fran Pell, Consumer Safety Officer, FDA/Center for Veterinary Medicine, Division of Compliance, 240-276-9211, e-mail frances.pell@fda.hhs.gov.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 11, 2006

Contacts: Gary Whelan 517-373-6948, Gary Towns 734-953-0241 or Mary Dettloff 517-335-3014

DNR Confirms Virus in Lake St. Clair Fish

The Department of Natural Resources has confirmed that viralhemorrhagic septicemia (VHS), a virus that causes disease in fish but does not pose any threat to public health, is present in several fish species in Lake St. Clair. The virus has also been detected in fish in the past year in Lake Ontario by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and New York Department of Environmental Conservation, in Lake Erie by the Ohio Department of Wildlife, and in the St. Lawrence River by the New York Department of Environmental Conservation.

The virus was detected by the DNR/MSU Aquatic Animal Health Unit in muskellunge, yellow perch, gizzard shad, northern pike, silver redhorse, and shorthead redhorse collected this past spring in Lake St. Clair. DNR fisheries officials now believe VHS was a likely factor in the deaths of muskellunge, yellow perch, and gizzard shad observed during the spring of 2006 in the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair,

and the Detroit River. The timing of the die-offs corresponded with the end of the stressful winter season for all fish species and the beginning of spawning season for muskellunge. Spawning is extremely taxing and creates additional stress on fish, thus making them more vulnerable to infection and disease. VHS outbreaks tend to occur during the spring season since the virus thrives at water temperatures between 40 and 60 degrees.

VHS has also affected fish elsewhere in the lower Great Lakes. This past spring, 18 dead and dying muskellunge were collected in the Thousand Islands region of the St. Lawrence River during the spawning period. In addition, VHS is suspected as a factor in large-scale mortalities of freshwater drum and yellow perch observed in Lake Erie, and large numbers of round gobies that perished in Lake Ontario this past spring.

There are at least four different strains of VHS. The virus has been found in continental Europe, Japan, and both coasts of North America. The European strain of this virus has been responsible for large-scale losses in rainbow trout and turbot in fish farms. Prior to 2005, VHS-related mortalities were limited in North America to saltwater fish species such as Pacific herring and pilchard from the Pacific Coast of North America and mummichogs in Atlantic Ocean tributary streams. Systemic VHS infections have been found in a range of North American fish including rainbow trout, brown trout, lake trout, Chinook salmon, and coho salmon, but large-scale mortalities have not been documented to date. In 2005, VHS was detected for the first time in Great Lakes fish species in the US and Canada, including muskellunge in Michigan's waters of Lake St. Clair and freshwater drum in Lake Ontario. It is not known how VHS was transferred to the Great Lakes region or how long it has been in the waterways of the Great Lakes, although a re-analyzed sample from a muskellunge collected in Lake St. Clair in 2003 has recently tested positive for the virus.

It is not known what the long-term effects of this virus will be in Michigan, DNR fisheries officials said.

"One likely possibility is that VHS will act like

many other viruses in the environment. Typically, viruses or bacteria infect fish, which may lead to disease in the fish if they are susceptible. Once the disease is expressed in these fish, a small percentage will die," said Kelley Smith, chief of the DNR Fisheries Division. "The vast majority, however, will survive and will develop immunity to the viruses or bacteria that cause a disease. Since there are no large-scale treatments for VHS that can be applied to fish in the wild, the presence of this new virus may result in spring fish mortalities that are abnormally high for a few years as more fish encounter the virus. These mortalities should abate as fish begin to build immunity to the virus."

Citizens are encouraged to report sick fish or fish kills to their local DNR office or use the DNR webpage at www.michigan.gov/dnr. Anglers should contact the DNR if they observe fish that exhibit any of the following signs: hemorrhaging in the skin, including large red patches particularly on the sides and anterior portion of the head; multiple hemorrhages on the liver, spleen, or intestines; or hemorrhages on the swim bladder that give the otherwise transparent organ a mottled appearance. This information will help DNR fisheries staff to track VHS and take appropriate management actions to help slow the spread of this virus.

Anglers and boaters can also help prevent the spread of VHS and other viruses or bacteria that cause disease in fish by not transferring fish between water bodies, and by thoroughly cleaning boats, trailers, nets, and other equipment when traveling between different lakes and streams. The use of a light disinfectant such as a solution of one part chlorine bleach to 10 parts water (i.e., 1 gallon of bleach to 10 gallons of water) to clean vessels and live wells is very effective against VHS and other viruses and bacteria that cause disease in fish. Soaking exposed items such as live wells, nets, anchors, and bait buckets in a light disinfectant for 30 minutes is also an effective method to prevent the spread of a wide range of aquatic nuisance species.

The DNR is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural resources for current and future generations.

New MIADC Committee Formed

May 16, 2006 was the kickoff meeting for the newly formed Michigan Aquaculture Development Committee. The Mission of MIADC is to promote economic development in conjunction with environmental sustainability for the aquaculture industry in the State of Michigan. This committee is represented by: Michigan Aquaculture Industry, Michigan Baitfish Industry, Michigan Farm Bureau, Michigan State University, Michigan Sea Grant, West Shore Community College, and Michigan Department of Agriculture. Stay tuned for news about this committee in the near future!

MAA Members dish out 300 Shrimp Burgers at the Capitol

May 23, 2006 was Ag day at the Capitol. Russ and Chris attended the event, which if based on the number of people stopping by for a shrimp burger, was a huge success! This is a great opportunity to meet past, current, and future legislators here in the state of Michigan. Thanks to Farm Bureau for sponsoring this event again this year. If invited again, MAA members are highly encouraged to participate and bring fish to compliment Russ's shrimp. While Russ received much, much attention, there are plenty of politicians to pass around other types of seafood to.

Questions on Public Stocking of Warm Water Species Remain

If you're still confused about whether perch and walleye need to be certified for public stocking it appears that you are not alone. Last word was yes, certification is required if the fish are coming from a state that has reported heterosporis. Apparently this issue remains on a case by case issue. Unfortunately these types of open ended rules are often based completely on the discretion of individual DNR biologists. MIDNR and MDA have been asked to work issues such as this out in the MOU. It would appear we still have some work to do.

For late breaking info, check our website:

www.michiganaquaculture.com

In Passing

We have recently have been informed of Robert Tieman passing in June. Bob operated the Watersmeet Trout Hatchery with his wife Barb for the past 36 years and was a regular UP icon of the industry. We will truly miss Bob's nature and wisdom. Our condolences goes out to Barb and the family for their loss.

Join the MAA email discussion listing

If you're hooked up to the internet and not a part of the MAA discussion group your missing out on great discussions and important legislative update information.

To register, go to the following site:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/michaqua/>

Aquaculture Interest Column

In every newsletter we would like to add at least one article written by a member of MAA. This could be something about your farm, experiences, concerns you may have, a study you might have done, or just about anything you feel would be worth passing on (aquaculture related please). If you have something you would like to contribute, send a copy to either Bob Baldwin or Chris Weeks.

Current Officers

President: Chris Weeks 517/353-5453

Vice President: Bob Baldwin 231/796-2284

Sec/Treas: Steve Ouwinga 231/834-7720

Director: Russ Allen 517/347-5537

Director: Robert Lee 517/549-3402

Classified Ads

Advertising Info: Contact Steve Ouwinga at (231) 834-7720.

Rates: \$15/ad, up to 40 words - additional words @ 35 cents per word. Newsletter dates are Jan 5, April 15, July 15 and October 15, please submit your ad no later than 5 days prior to these publishing dates.

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www.michiganaquaculture.com