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# AQUACULTURE SITUATION AND OUTLOOK REPORT 2007: VERMONT

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## Industry Trends and Outlook

Vermont has six permitted trout producers. All produce rainbow, brown and/or brook trout. Most fish are used to stock public and private ponds, often through Conservation District pond stocking programs. The producers also supply trout fingerlings. A small amount of trout is produced on farms for sale to local markets. The number of trout producers has declined from 15 producing farms, including two food fish producers, in the last 15 years.

There are two permits for tilapia production. While these are currently limited to production for research or education only, these producers are using the permits to determine economic feasibility. If successful, the State expects the holders to apply for commercial production permits.

Currently, there are not any commercial baitfish producers in the State, although several have produced small quantities on an off and on basis in previous years.

## Commercial Species List

- Rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)
- Brown trout (*Salmo trutta*)
- Brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*)
- Tilapia (*Oreochromis* spp.)

## Addressing Industry Needs

Researchers, Extension specialists, resource managers, industry associations and concerned stakeholders all play a role in addressing industry



Most fish are used to stock public and private ponds. (Photo: Lucas James Williams Memorial Youth Fund <http://www.lucasjameswilliamsyouthfund.org/>)

needs. The following sections outline new initiatives and recent accomplishments in these areas.

## Aquaculture Research

Aquaculture research is not underway in the State of Vermont at this time.

## Aquaculture Extension

The University of Vermont (UVM) Extension and local Conservation Districts have periodically partnered to bring in Aquaculture Specialists from neighboring states to lead pond owner workshops on recreational and small-scale food fish production, and pond management. Currently, there is not an Aquaculture Extension Specialist in the State.

## Emerging Issues and Critical Needs

- Circumstances have recently changed that will strongly encourage the development of local baitfish production. Baitfish are an important commodity that supports an economically important recreational fishing industry (both open water and ice fishing). Vermont state baitfish regulations changed in 2007 to reduce the risk of introducing exotic invasive fish species into the state and the Lake Champlain Basin. Regulations limit the types of baitfish permitted (golden shiner, emerald shiner, and white sucker only) and phase out imports of baitfish from outside the basin. New regulations will further restrict baitfish movement within the state. On the other side of the Lake Champlain Basin, New York is also restricting baitfish movement to prevent the eastward spread of Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS). Cutting off external supply and limiting in-state movement of baitfish provide multiple opportunities for in-state bait fish production.
- In response to new State restrictions on baitfish import and movement, Lake Champlain Sea Grant, the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and University of Vermont Extension are actively seeking support to develop projects to demonstrate baitfish production techniques and document financial aspects of small-scale, low tech baitfish production. We are also collaborating with New York Department of Environmental Conservation to expand the demonstrations to New York in support of their VHS prevention effort.

We provide regionally appropriate aquaculture information on request to the public. UVM Extension has also presented state information at limited national and regional meetings.

## Aquaculture Education

The University of Vermont does not have any formal undergraduate or graduate programs in aquaculture education, however, UVM Extension does host informal education seminars and workshops in pond management and small-scale aquaculture. Post-educational surveys have documented both improved knowledge and changes in pond management practices among participants in workshops hosted by University of Vermont Extension.

## Aquaculture Resources

### Vermont Aquaculture Association

<http://www.vermontagriculture.com/vaa/index.htm>

### Northeastern Regional Aquaculture Center

The NRAC is one of five Regional Aquaculture Centers established by the U. S. Congress which supports research and outreach efforts to promote the development of the aquaculture industry. <http://www.nrac.umd.edu>

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