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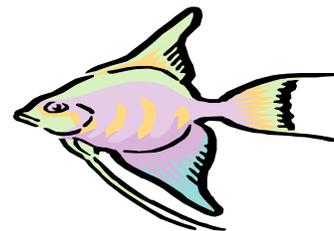
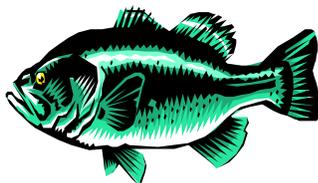
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The Piketon Research & Extension Center's aquaculture program supports efforts to develop and demonstrate the potential for an aquaculture industry in Ohio through university-based research and statewide extension programs.

For additional information, contact Laura G. Tiu, Aquaculture Research & Extension Associate.



IS AQUACULTURE FOR YOU?



Aquaculture is the farming and husbandry of aquatic animals and plants. Aquaculture methods range from extensive pond culture to intensive recirculating systems. It is much more than just stocking fish in a pond and then cashing a check. It is a very expensive and risky form of agriculture. Still, aquaculture has attracted the attention of farmers, landowners and investors as an alternative agriculture enterprise. Like other forms of farming, aquaculture involves capital investment, labor, management, and above all, risk. If you are considering aquaculture, this checklist can help you determine whether an aquaculture enterprise is feasible for your particular situation. This checklist does not cover all possibilities, of course. Answering "yes" to most of the questions won't guarantee success, just as answering "no" won't mean automatic failure. The checklist does address the most important considerations. Steps to a successful aquaculture operation include: reading and studying publications, journals and books; attending meetings and seminars; joining and participating in the Ohio Aquaculture Association; talking with other aquaculture farmers and extension agents; preparing a business plan; and finally, testing your aquaculture plans on a small scale before investing large amounts of capital and labor. Ultimately, YOU decide if aquaculture is for you!

YES NO MARKETING

- _____ YES _____ NO 1. Have you assessed the existing market in terms of species, market size and seasonal demand, potential customers/competition and wholesale/retail price?
- _____ YES _____ NO 2. In what form will you market your product (alive, dressed, fillets)?
- _____ YES _____ NO 3. Do you have the equipment and personnel to harvest, handle, hold, and transport your product?
- _____ YES _____ NO 4. Are you familiar with the legal requirements to market your product?
- _____ YES _____ NO 5. Do you have an alternative marketing strategy to fall back on?

YES NO ECONOMICS

- _____ 1. Have you developed a realistic, written business plan with monthly objectives and projected cash flow for the first year?
- _____ 2. Do you have a realistic, written business plan for each of the next three to five years?
- _____ 3. Do you own or have access to property needed for the proposed aquacultural project?
- _____ 4. Have you determined cost for construction or improvements to the site?
- _____ 5. Do you own or have access to the necessary equipment such as: nets, pumps, feeders, graders, live-haul tanks, etc.?
- _____ 6. Do you to have the necessary financial resources?
- _____ 7. Can you secure the capital for start up and operation at a reasonable cost?
- _____ 8. Will your lender accommodate your production/marketing cycle (which differs from traditional row crops)?
- _____ 9. Is the profit potential for aquaculture higher than that of other possible investments?
- _____ 10. Can you afford to wait 6 to 18 months for income until your first crop attains marketable size and can be sold?
- _____ 11. Are you willing to devote the daily time and effort required?
- _____ 12. Do you have an adequate cash reserve for unanticipated costs, such as equipment failure, system modification and crop loss?

YES NO PERSONAL

- _____ 1. Are you willing to work long, hard and irregular hours (16 hour days, 7 days per week)?
- _____ 2. Are you comfortable with mathematical problem solving, economics/accounting and marketing?
- _____ 3. Are you willing to seek help when you need it?
- _____ 4. Do you have the technical expertise?
- _____ 5. If not, can you afford to hire it?
- _____ 6. Do you know others in the business who will provide help and advice?

- _____ 7. Do you belong to the Ohio Aquaculture Association?
- _____ 8. Do you subscribe to and read aquacultural periodicals?
- _____ 9. Are you willing to attend short courses in aquaculture or attend workshops to learn about current practices and new developments?
- _____ 10. Will your family support your decision?

YES NO SITE AND DESIGN

- _____ 1. Can the proposed site be made suitable for aquaculture production with an acceptable amount of investment?
- _____ 2. Is the site sufficiently large for expansion if desired in the future?
- _____ 3. Do you live close enough to the culture site to visit and monitor as needed and insure security?
- _____ 4. Is an adequate supply of high-quality water available and suitable for aquaculture production?
- _____ 5. Can you effectively manage the waste produced by your operation?
- _____ 6. Is an economical and dependable source of utilities available (gas, electric and phone)?

YES NO LEGAL CONSTRAINTS

- _____ 1. Will your neighbors or other affected groups accept the aquaculture operation?
- _____ 2. Have you discussed your planned operation with the appropriate state agencies (DNR, EPA, etc.) and your local Cooperative Extension Agent?
- _____ 3. Have you identified the permits required to construct and operate an aquacultural operation?
- _____ 4. Can the required permits be obtained without excessive investment in time, money and effort?

YES NO PRODUCTION

- _____ 1. Have you determined what species you want to cultivate and are there established culture techniques?
- _____ 2. Have you explored the different production technologies available and identified one that meets your abilities and resources?

- _____ 3. Are there dependable sources of fingerlings or do you have the resources to maintain and spawn adults, incubate eggs and rear juveniles?
- _____ 4. Are feed and other essential supplies readily available at reasonable prices?
- _____ 5. Are back up systems available?
- _____ 6. Are disease diagnostic services and dependable technical assistance readily available?
- _____ 7. Are there trained, experienced, and dependable labor available?

For a list of aquaculture organizations, publications and resources, request Ohio Sea Grant fact sheet #051 from either of the addresses on page 1.