

Seaweed's Role in US Aquaculture

Anoushka Concepcion

Connecticut Sea Grant

anoushka.concepcion@uconn.edu

Narragansett Bay

SAMP Webinar Series

December 4th, 2023



What are Seaweeds?

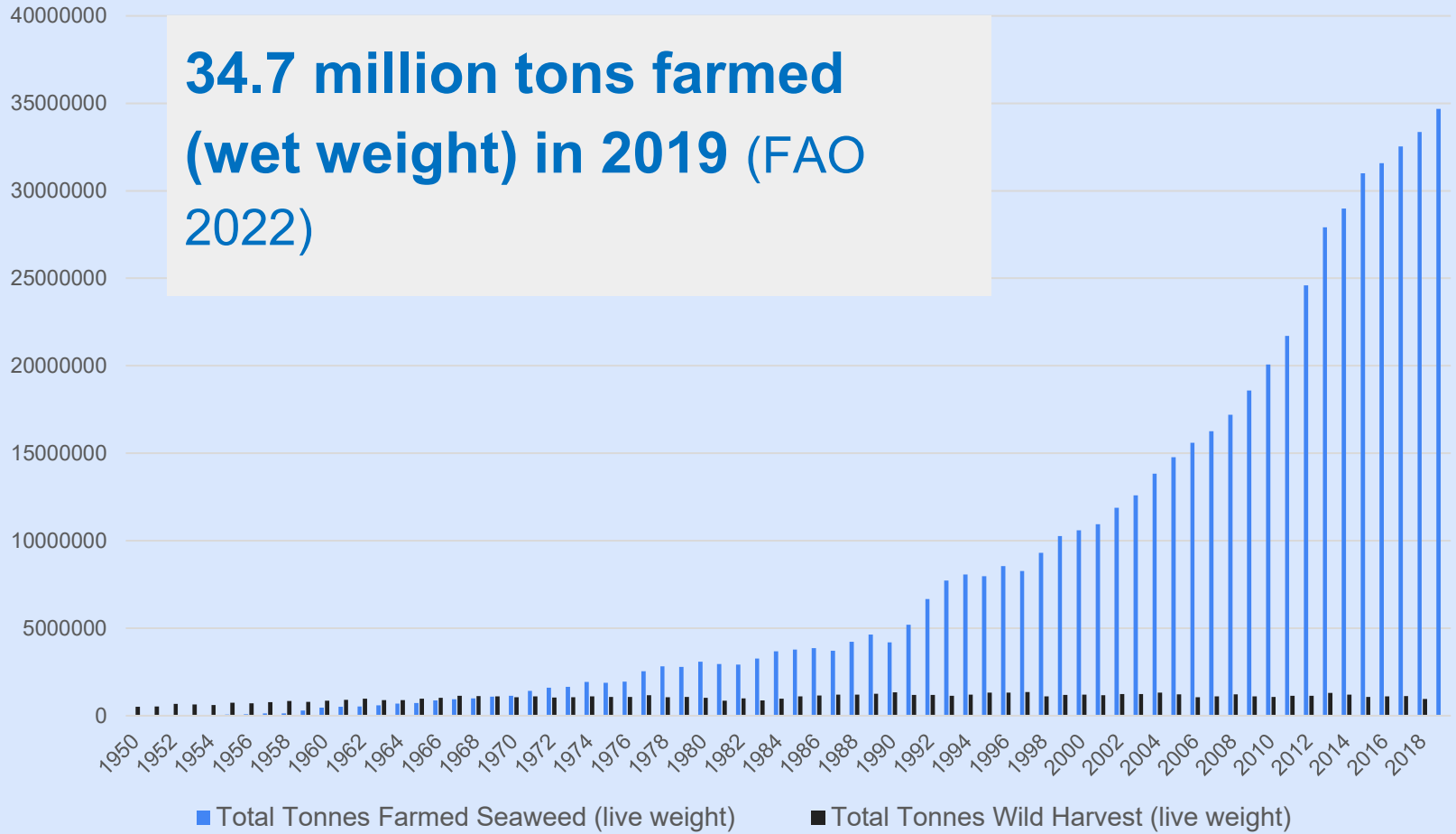
- NOT plants
- Macroalgae
- 3 types:
 - Red
 - Brown
 - Green



Why are Seaweeds Important?

- Part of a healthy ecosystem
- Habitat and food
- Versatile: food, supplements, PCP, fertilizers

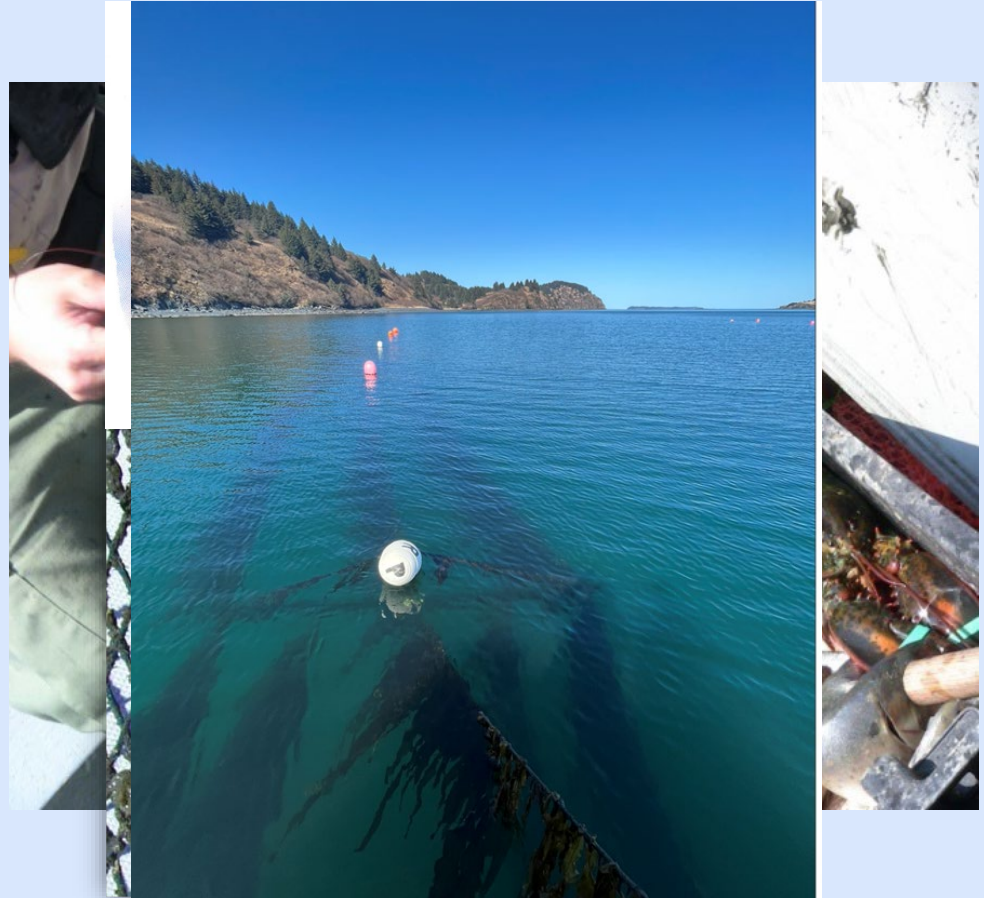




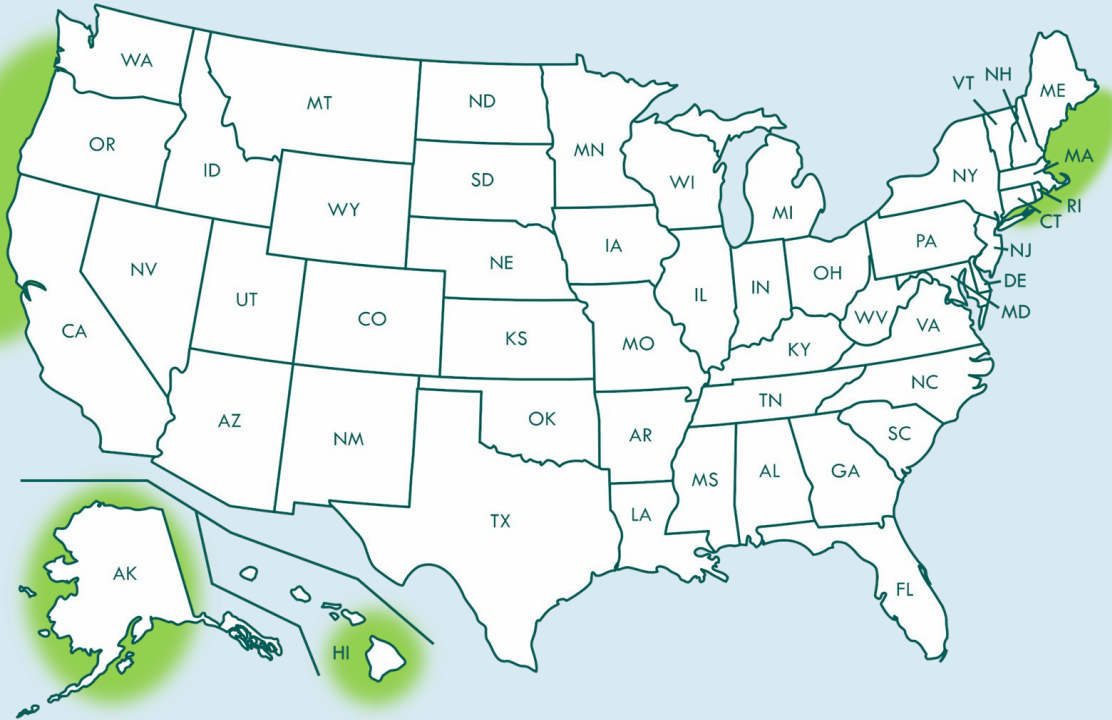
**34.7 million tons farmed
(wet weight) in 2019 (FAO
2022)**

Why Farm Seaweed?

- Support year-round coastal economies
- Product diversification
- Responsibly produced



Seaweed Farming in the US



- A young industry emerging over the last decade
- Currently producing cold-water kelps and tank-cultured red algae
- Production primarily occurring in the Northeast and Northwest, as well as Hawai'i.
- For most operations - small scale with limited, seasonal production (winter)
- Current markets are primarily human consumption/food

Status of Production

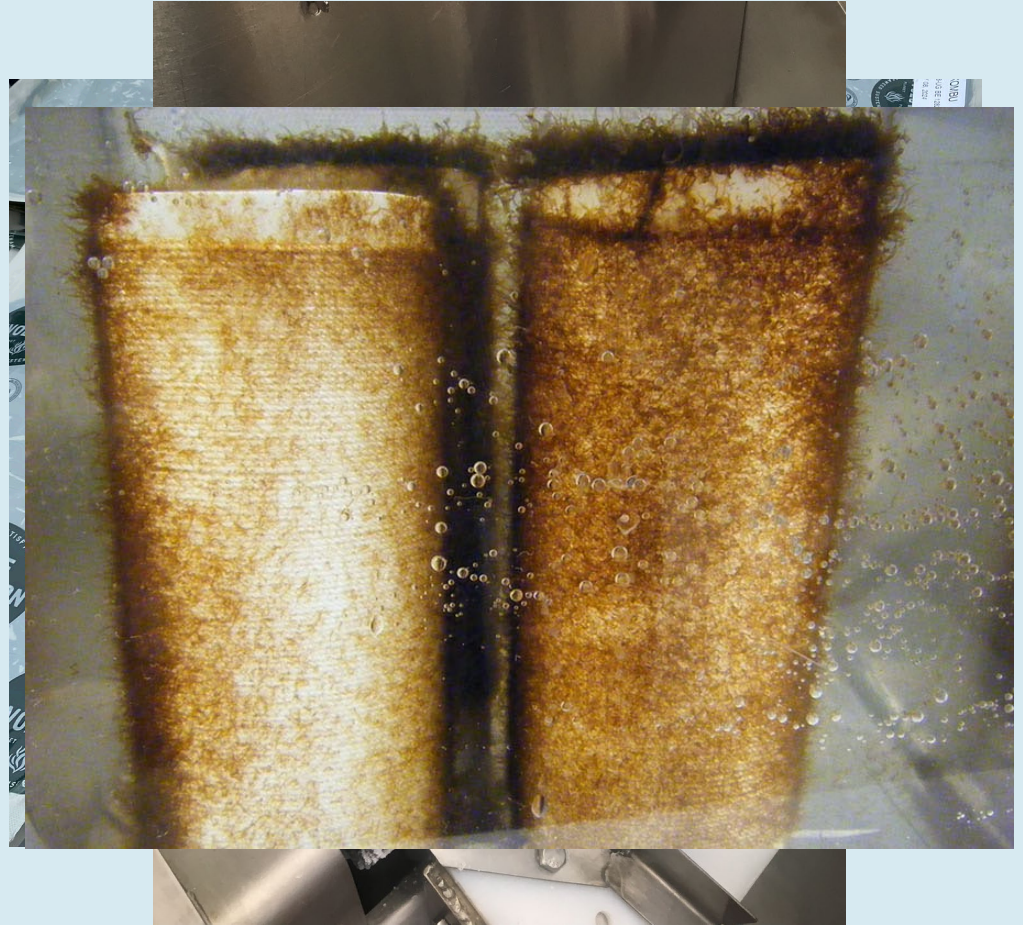
Region	East Coast						West Coast				
State	ME	NH	MA	RI	CT	NY	AK	WA	OR	CA	HI
Landings wet lbs.	1M+ *2022	N/A	9,500 *2022	14k *2022	3,800 *2022	1,000 *2022	871k+ *2022	10,000 *2022	N/A	N/A	250k+ *2022
Landings wet MT	454+	N/A	4.3	6.3	1.7	0.5	395+	4.5	N/A	N/A	113+
# of farms and use	40+ active comm. farms (100+ permitted sites)	5 (2 active 2 res)	5 comm farms	10 farms (3 active)	15 farms (10 active in 2022)	1 (3 res)	50 permitted farm sites (30 active)	3 farms (ocean and land-based farms)	3 land-based farms	4 farms (ocean and land-based farms)	7 farms (all tank cultivation)

MANAGING EXPECTATIONS



Barriers to Expansion

- Access to markets
- Post-harvest and processing infrastructure
- Access to seed



Addressing Barriers

A COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP FUNDED BY THE NATIONAL SEA GRANT PROGRAM

National Seaweed Hub

Search this site...



About the Hub ▾

Symposiums ▾

Resources ▾

News & Updates

STATUS OF THE INDUSTRY .PDF

National Seaweed Hub

science-based, non-advocate resource for the domestic seaweed aquaculture industry and associated sectors

MORE ABOUT THE HUB



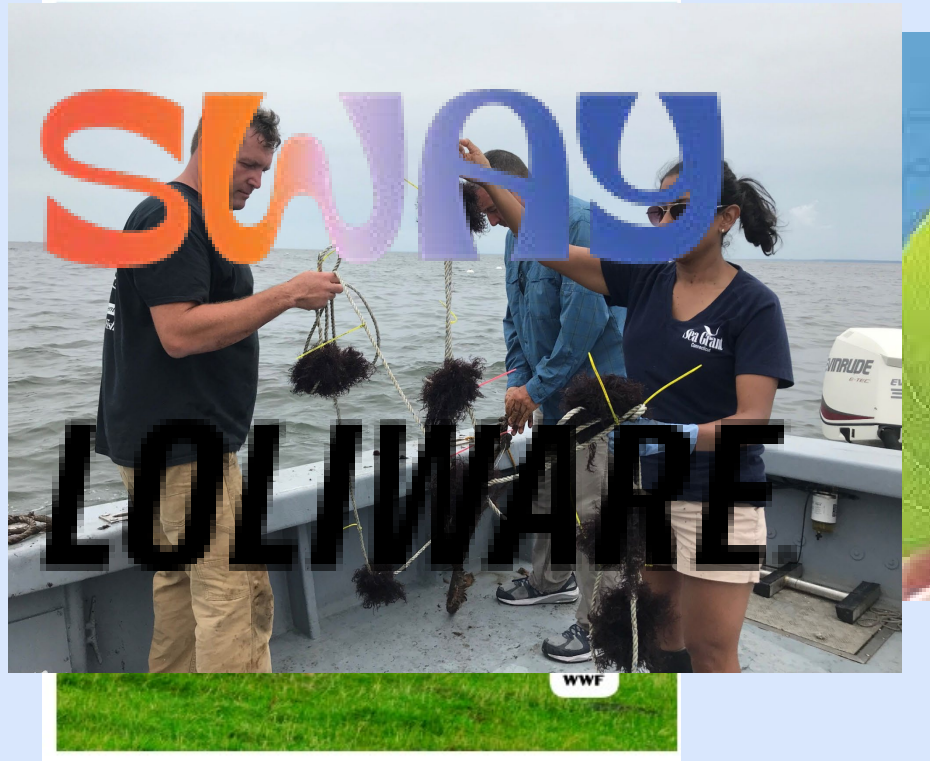
Addressing Barriers

- Nursery Production
- Food Safety
- Business Planning



Innovative Applications

- Biofuels
- Bio-textiles
- Livestock methane emissions
- Seaweed in carbon-intensive products



- Must be economically viable
- Farmers
- Processors
- End-users



Thank you

Anoushka.concepcion@uconn.edu

