



AUDITOR BIOGRAPHIES

The RSSBP Hatchery Compliance Program is supported by a team of third-party experts in the field of shellfish production. These knowledgeable individuals conduct in-person facility audits to verify compliance with the RSSBP Best Management Practices. They have been instrumental in supporting improvements to the RSSBP Pilot.

Note - Auditors in the pilot program are reimbursed for travel and provided a modest honorarium from grant funds. The Project Team is actively working to expand auditor capacity with a self-sustainable financial structure.



John Ewart completed a 40-year career with the University of Delaware College of Earth, Ocean and Environment in 2018. He completed a Bachelor of Science degree in zoology from the University of Rhode Island and a Master of Science degree in Marine Studies from the University of Delaware. John's background includes aquaculture, commercial fisheries, oceanographic technology, field biology, applied research, and domestic/international consulting. As the aquaculture and fisheries specialist with Delaware Sea Grant program from 1986 to 2018, John collaborated with private and public sector individuals, groups, and other state extension programs in the northeast and nationally to support and improve commercial and recreational fisheries and aquaculture industry development.

In cooperation with the Delaware Center for the Inland Bays, the University of Delaware and Delaware State University, John coordinated oyster and hard clam (quahog) field research and demonstration activities (1998-2013). That work provided technical information and supported passage of legislation in 2013 to authorize commercial leasing for shellfish aquaculture in Delaware's coastal (aka Inland) bays. The first commercial lease was activated in 2018.

Together with Sea Grant Seafood Technologist colleague Doris Hicks, John developed a multi-faceted regional and national seafood education program - Aquaculture and Fish Tech 101 - for extension, industry, restaurant staff, nutritionists and other health professionals. The regional program format included multi-day workshops, classroom sessions, tours, and hands on demonstrations. Major topics included: International and Domestic Seafood Supply: Situation and Outlook; Seafood Safety: Harvest, Processing and Distribution; Current Issues in Seafood Nutrition and Health; and Seafood Public Communication and Media Issues. We also provided specialized presentations at professional conferences on important seafood related trends and issues from source to table.



Gef Flimlin is a Professor Emeritus having worked for 38 years at Rutgers University as Marine Extension Agent with Rutgers Cooperative Extension in Commercial Fisheries and Aquaculture. He has a BS in Biology from St Peter's College and a MS in Marine and Environmental Science from the CW Post Center of Long Island University. His focus was to serve as a liaison between the commercial fishing and aquaculture industry and the research community, state and federal agencies, equipment and material suppliers, and the academic world.

Over the years his work focused on satellite imagery for catching large pelagic fish, upgrading offshore weather forecasting, seafood handling, seafood processing, marketing, and leadership development for the industry. He worked in shellfish aquaculture including field experiments, disease tests, new species trials, production gear design and implementation, seafood handling, shellfish marketing and post-harvest processing, and using recirculating fish culture systems and aquaponics as a tool to teach responsibility for county jail inmates. He was involved with the clam farmers and hatchery operators in New Jersey and started an annual list of hatcheries and nurseries on the East Coast which was distributed to industry to purchase seed.

He served for many years on the USDA Northeastern Regional Aquaculture Center's Technical Advisory Council, finally as its Chair. Professor Flimlin served on the International Conference for the Exportation of the Seas Aquaculture Work Group meeting internationally. He has been intimately involved with the formation of a Hard Clam Farmers' Cooperative, and infusing seafood into Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms and starting CSFs (Community Supported Fisheries). He helped form the NJ Aquaculture Association, East Coast Shellfish Growers Association, sat on a number of national extension aquaculture committees, and served in several leadership positions of the National Shellfisheries Association, the World Aquaculture Society, and the US Aquaculture Society where he was the President. Most recently he oversaw the development of two free online courses in seaweed and micro-algae cultivation. When needed he performs insurance claims for the USDA Farm Services Administration.



John Kraeuter retired as the Associate Director of the Haskin Shellfish Research Laboratory of Rutgers University in 2012. He currently is a Visiting Scientist at Haskin Lab, and a Research Professor at the University of New England. He received his Bachelor's degree from Florida State University, Masters from William and Mary (Virginia Institute of Marine Science) and PhD from the University of Delaware. He then took Post-Doctoral position at the University of Georgia Marine Institute on Sapelo Island.

At Rutgers he was a major contributor to developing the Aquaculture Plan for the State of New Jersey and was a co-editor of a major compilation that brought together the disparate information on the Biology of the Hard Clam *Mercenaria*.

He helped to design, build and run a fish aquaculture facility to investigate the potential for the culture of Striped Bass utilizing the hot water effluent from a coal fired power plant. At Rutgers he was responsible for the basic design of and overseeing construction of the 20,000 sq ft. Aquaculture Innovation Center. He conducted research on estuarine ecology, focusing on benthic ecology and shellfish aquaculture – mostly the hard clam, *Mercenaria mercenaria* and Virginia oyster, *Crassostrea virginica*. While at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science he was instrumental in working with the developing clam aquaculture industry to evaluate systems that permitted economical field culture of the hard clam.

He has served as President of the Atlantic Estuarine Research Society and the National Shellfisheries Association, and has been awarded the David Wallace Award and the Honored Life Member of NSA. He has served on numerous state and federal committees including nearly 8 years on the Minerals Management Service of the Department of Interior Outer Continental Shelf Scientific Advisory Committee (Now Bureau of Ocean Energy) and several years on the USEPA Joint Subcommittee on Aquaculture – Aquaculture Effluents Task Force where he helped to write the section on effluents from molluscan hatcheries.



Michael Oesterling is currently the Executive Director of the Shellfish Growers of Virginia (www.vashellfish.org), a trade association of oyster and clam farmers. For 30-years prior to his current position, he served as the Virginia Sea Grant Marine Extension Program fisheries and aquaculture specialist at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), College of William & Mary. He worked primarily with nearshore commercial fisheries, with emphasis on molluscan shellfish and blue crabs, including the harvest of hard crabs and the production of soft-shell crabs. He has extensive experience in shellfish aquaculture, both commercial and non-commercial. During his time at VIMS, he successfully spawned and reared oysters, hard clams, soft-shell clams, and bay scallops. He also has experience with marine finfish aquaculture in recirculating systems, successfully raising cobia, spot, spadefish, and killifish.