Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

Division of Marketing

Agricultural Development & Diversification Program (ADD)

2000 Grant Project Final Report

Contract Number: 15013

Grant Project Title: Establishment of Aquaculture Effluets Profile (Year 1)

Project Beginning Date: August 1, 2000 Project End Date: August 1, 2001

Amount of Funding Awarded: $10,800

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Fourth quarter sampling took place October-December 2001, and all year one results are now received, compiled and entered into a database. The database has been made available to the scientist/analysis team of Dr. Hartleb, Dr. Malison, and Dr. Kebus. Under the direction of Dr. Hartleb, UW-Stevens Point Aquaculture Program students will commit the data to graphic representation in order to make results clear and easy to read and analyze. This activity is at the request of the science team.

Since the project covers another full year of testing, a true, comprehensive final report will not be written until that time. In the meantime, it is clear following year one that the data will contain several significant results. Changes in water quality at each farm, from source to discharge, are well documented, and can be understood relative to other farm conditions such as flow rate and quantities of fish stocked and feed used. Additionally, the data is appropriate to analysis of changes in water chemistry in receiving waterways from above and below the point of farm discharge.

Some farms are equipped with settling ponds, aerated or non-aerated, and the sampling sites have been structured to demonstrate the effects they have, when possible.

As indicated in the year-one and year-two grant proposals and work plans, the focus of attention will shift from developing and refining the experimental design (year-one) to analysis of data and conclusions (year-two). The science team has been relatively inactive in year-one, following the establishment of initial experimental design and sampling protocols; in year-two, they will step to the fore.

Year-one succeeded in developing an ongoing working relationship among farmers, data collectors (aquaculture veterinarians) and the testing lab. The roles of Mac Graham, project coordinator, and Dr. Robert Smith, data collection team head and custodian of the data, were vital and instrumental to the process. Getting it together and keeping it together were a challenge. Year-two will undoubtedly prove similar.

Optimism regarding the applicability of results remains high. US-EPA efforts to re-evaluate regulations of aquaculture effluents are on-going and updated Wisconsin regulations await EPA action. In near total absence of studies quantifying effects of aquaculture effluents, this project will give a valid scientific basis for developing fair regulations in an area potentially restrictive to flow-through aquaculture.

Estimated budgets for expense categories were off, even with last summer's adjustment. The slight surpluses available from consultant services and clerical were applied to laboratory testing.