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Investments Support a Rapidly Growing Aquaculture Industry

As the aquaculture industry sets record production values, the Newfoundland Aquaculture Industry Association (NAIA) will use a \$200,633 investment from the Provincial Government to continue workforce training and skill development. The continued development of a highly-skilled workforce creates a solid foundation on which the industry can continue to grow and prosper.

In 2010, NAIA, with assistance from the Provincial Government, coordinated a series of courses to improve the proficiency of those employed in the sector. The association's latest training programs will build on that programming and enable those who previously underwent training to acquire a certificate as an aquaculture technician and conduct training for new entrants.

“With rapid growth over a relatively short period of time, human resource development was identified as a key objective toward ensuring a sustainable aquaculture industry,” said the Honourable Susan Sullivan, Minister of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development. “This program will ensure employees are receiving the latest training in this highly skilled and continually advancing sector. The aquaculture operators will also benefit by having a workforce that utilizes the latest industry techniques, therefore increasing productivity and quality of the product destined for markets around the world.”

Newfoundland and Labrador's aquaculture industry, centred in the Coast of Bays and Green Bay regions, has been experiencing tremendous growth over the past 10 to 15 years. In 2010, aquaculture production reached a record level of 15,360 tonnes, valued at \$116 million. Production rose 13 per cent and the market value for aquaculture products increased by 26 per cent. Currently, there are approximately 100 licensed sites in the province directly employing over 700 people. It is anticipated that every direct job in the industry creates another indirect job in spin-off industries.

“Aquaculture is becoming a major contributor to our rural and coastal communities,” said the Honourable Clyde Jackman, Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture. “This industry is highly technical and new technologies, methods and processes are evolving rapidly. It is incumbent on us to ensure that our industry is highly trained to meet the rigorous standards of sustainability, health, growth and environmental management required in today's seafood market. Our objective is to produce the most sustainable and highest quality seafood in the world. This training initiative will be coordinated by NAIA to ensure our workers are up to that challenge.” The training of approximately 100 individuals will be delivered by the Marine Institute and industry partners, on location, so that as many employees as possible can participate.

“The aquaculture industry throughout Newfoundland and Labrador is playing a significant role in our rural economy and through the commitment of our Provincial Government we are striving to reach our full potential” said Miranda Pryor, Executive Director of the NAIA. “We are

grateful for the tremendous support that is being provided to the hundreds of employees who are working in our industry. Working with the Marine Institute, we are committed to the people and communities of this province and to establishing long-term, sustainable employment and prosperity within dozens of communities for many years to come.”

Formed in 1993, NAIA is a non-profit organization with a mission to assist the aquaculture industry in achieving its full potential. It delivers programs and services to its members to attain excellence in safety, quality, environmental sustainability, and profitability.

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