

The Economic Contribution of Oyster Mariculture in South Carolina

In 2019, South Carolina's off-bottom oyster mariculture industry **contributed over \$8.7 million in output to the state's economy and supported 130 jobs.** Demand for locally-grown and sustainably-produced oysters in South Carolina restaurants drives much of this economic activity.



Farm Investment

2 Jobs Supported
\$458K Output

Farming Operations

49 Jobs Supported
\$1.8M Output

Gross Restaurant Sales

79 Jobs Supported
\$6.4M Output



130

Total Jobs Supported

\$8.7M
Total Output

The total economic contribution includes direct, indirect, and induced impacts. These estimates reflect not only sales from farmers, but related sales at restaurants as well as investment expenditures spent by the farmers themselves for their farms. The presence of the oyster mariculture industry has spillover effects into other businesses in South Carolina, supporting jobs and generating economic output in multiple sectors.



For more information, contact Marzieh Motallebi with Clemson University (mmotall@clemson.edu) or Graham Gaines with South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium (graham.gaines@scseagrant.org).



2019 Production Levels

9

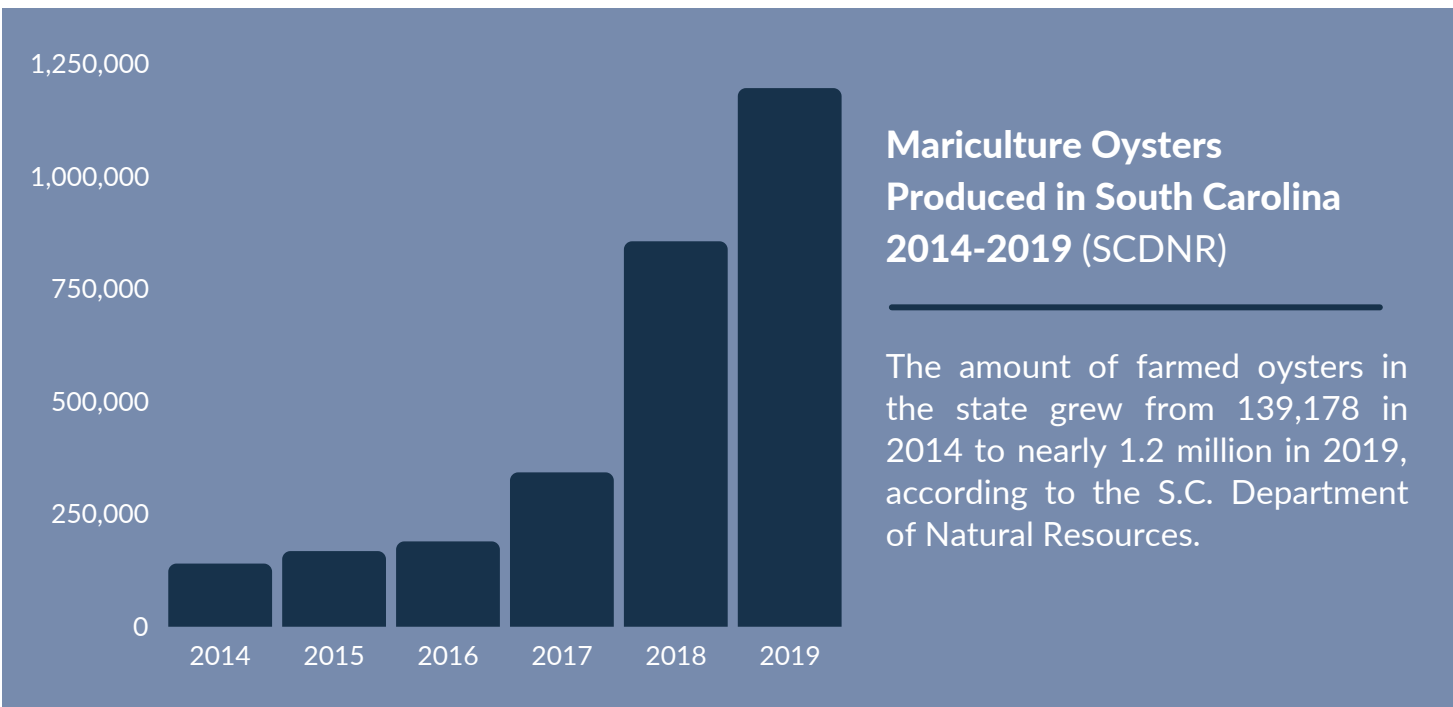
Farms

1,193,892 Total Oysters



An Estimated 14.6 Billion Gallons of Filtered Water in 2019

In addition to generating economic output, supporting jobs, and producing food, South Carolina's oyster mariculture industry contributes to the water quality in the state's tidal creeks. As filter feeders, oysters naturally clean particles out of the water that flows over their gills. The South Carolina industry produced 1,193,892 oysters in 2019. With each staying in the water about one year, it is estimated that this crop provided the public benefit of filtering 14,676,753,020 gallons of water in the state's tidal creeks and estuaries.¹



¹ Ehrich, M.K. and Harris L.A. (2015). A Review of Existing Eastern Oyster Filtration Models. Ecological Modeling, 297: 201-212.