

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4898

To support equity for aquaculture and seafood at the Department of
Agriculture, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 5, 2025

Mr. PALLONE (for himself and Mrs. CAMMACK) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To support equity for aquaculture and seafood at the
Department of Agriculture, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Supporting Equity for Aquaculture and Seafood Act” or
6 the “SEAS Act”.

7 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
8 this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Aquaculture defined.

TITLE I—REPORTS ON AQUACULTURE

- Sec. 101. Report on Department of Agriculture seafood purchases and grants.
 Sec. 102. Report on Department of Agriculture support for aquaculture and the seafood industry.
 Sec. 103. Seafood industry defined.

TITLE II—PROMOTING EQUITY FOR AQUACULTURE AT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

- Sec. 201. Promoting equity for aquaculture producers in administration of Department of Agriculture grant programs.
 Sec. 202. Department of Agriculture internal education requirement.

TITLE III—SUPPORT FOR AQUACULTURE PRODUCERS

- Sec. 301. Regional aquaculture centers.
 Sec. 302. Shellfish research under Agriculture and Food Research Initiative.
 Sec. 303. Crop insurance policy for aquaculture products.

1 **SEC. 2. AQUACULTURE DEFINED.**

2 In this Act, the term “aquaculture” means the con-
 3 trolled breeding, rearing, and harvesting of fish, shellfish,
 4 sea vegetables, and other organisms in freshwater, salt-
 5 water, and any other controlled water environments.

6 **TITLE I—REPORTS ON** 7 **AQUACULTURE**

8 **SEC. 101. REPORT ON DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE SEA-** 9 **FOOD PURCHASES AND GRANTS.**

10 Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment
 11 of this Act, and annually thereafter through fiscal year
 12 2028, the Secretary of Agriculture shall submit to Con-
 13 gress a report that includes, with respect to the previous
 14 fiscal year—

- 15 (1) the total amount of expenditures of the De-
 16 partment of Agriculture on seafood purchases and
 17 aquaculture purchases and the value of such expend-
 18 itures;

1 (2) the total amount of expenditures of the De-
2 partment on seafood and aquaculture promotion and
3 outreach supporting the seafood and aquaculture in-
4 dustries and the value of such expenditures;

5 (3) the number of grants made by the Secretary
6 of Agriculture to the seafood industry and aqua-
7 culture industry, and the amount of such grants;
8 and

9 (4) the number of grants made by the Secretary
10 of Agriculture to facilitate seafood and aquaculture
11 research, the amount of such grants, and the subject
12 matter of such research.

13 **SEC. 102. REPORT ON DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE SUP-**
14 **PORT FOR AQUACULTURE AND THE SEAFOOD**
15 **INDUSTRY.**

16 Not later than 2 years after the date of the enact-
17 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall submit
18 to Congress a report—

19 (1) evaluating the Department of Agriculture’s
20 role in supporting aquaculture and the seafood in-
21 dustry;

22 (2) evaluating the domestic seafood processing
23 capacity of the United States and the impact of
24 overseas processing on domestic supply chains, aqua-
25 culture, and the seafood industry;

1 (3) examining the access to the Department of
2 Agriculture’s grants and resources aquaculture and
3 seafood producers have, as compared to traditional
4 land-based farmers;

5 (4) evaluating the potential environmental bene-
6 fits of aquaculture, with respect to climate, conserva-
7 tion, and pollution;

8 (5) evaluating the potential negative impacts of
9 aquaculture, with respect to pollution, waste, dis-
10 ease, and other repercussions; and

11 (6) providing recommendations to support and
12 advance best practices for aquaculture in the United
13 States.

14 **SEC. 103. SEAFOOD INDUSTRY DEFINED.**

15 In this title, the term “seafood industry” means shell-
16 fish growers, shellfish harvesters, sea vegetable growers,
17 fish farmers, commercial fishermen that harvest shellfish
18 or finfish, and other aquaculture producers.

1 **TITLE II—PROMOTING EQUITY**
2 **FOR AQUACULTURE AT DE-**
3 **PARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

4 **SEC. 201. PROMOTING EQUITY FOR AQUACULTURE PRO-**
5 **DUCERS IN ADMINISTRATION OF DEPART-**
6 **MENT OF AGRICULTURE GRANT PROGRAMS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—In awarding grants (or other as-
8 sistance) under programs administered by the Secretary,
9 the Secretary shall give the same consideration to aqua-
10 culture producers as animal agriculture producers.

11 (b) AQUACULTURE FUNDING.—The Secretary shall
12 ensure adequate and fair funding levels are made available
13 to aquaculture producers through grants (or other assist-
14 ance) under Department of Agriculture programs.

15 (c) ANIMAL AGRICULTURE DEFINED.—In this sec-
16 tion, the term “animal agriculture” means the raising,
17 breeding, harvesting, and slaughtering of beef, lamb, goat,
18 pork, duck, poultry, and other land-based organisms for
19 consumption and the production of animal products, in-
20 cluding milk, eggs, meat, skins, fibers, bones, feathers,
21 and other byproducts.

22 **SEC. 202. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE INTERNAL EDU-**
23 **CATION REQUIREMENT.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B of the Department of
25 Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6931

1 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 226B (7
2 U.S.C. 6934) the following:

3 **“SEC. 226C. AQUACULTURE EDUCATION.**

4 “(a) FSA OFFICES.—The Secretary shall develop
5 and implement a requirement for employees of each re-
6 gional office of the Farm Service Agency with respect to
7 education on aquaculture. Such requirement shall include
8 training for all existing and new employees on—

9 “(1) eligibility for aquaculture-related Federal
10 grants and programs;

11 “(2) the role of aquaculture in United States
12 agriculture; and

13 “(3) the support the Department of Agriculture
14 provides to seafood producers and aquaculture.

15 “(b) MEMORANDUM.—Not later than 2 years after
16 the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary
17 shall issue a department-wide memorandum that—

18 “(1) affirms the Department of Agriculture’s
19 current position that aquaculture plays a vital role
20 in the United States agriculture system; and

21 “(2) reiterates the eligibility of aquaculture and
22 seafood products and producers for programs admin-
23 istered by the Secretary.

24 “(c) WEBINARS.—The Secretary shall, beginning not
25 later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this

1 section and every 2 years thereafter, convene a conference
 2 (including a conference held on a virtual platform or
 3 through webinars) providing for education of officers and
 4 employees of the Department of Agriculture and relevant
 5 stakeholders on the state of aquaculture in the United
 6 States.”.

7 (b) TECHNICAL CORRECTION.—Effective as if in-
 8 cluded in the enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2018,
 9 subtitle A of the Department of Agriculture Reorganiza-
 10 tion Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6912 et seq.) is amended by
 11 redesignating the first section 225 (7 U.S.C. 6925) (relat-
 12 ing to the Food Access Liaison) as section 224A.

13 (c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 296(b)(7)
 14 of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of
 15 1994 (7 U.S.C. 7014(b)(7)) is amended by inserting be-
 16 fore the period at the end the following: “or to develop
 17 and implement the requirement relating to aquaculture
 18 education under section 226C”.

19 **TITLE III—SUPPORT FOR** 20 **AQUACULTURE PRODUCERS**

21 **SEC. 301. REGIONAL AQUACULTURE CENTERS.**

22 (a) EXTENSION.—Section 1477(a) of the National
 23 Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy
 24 Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3324(a)) is amended—

1 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “and” at the
2 end;

3 (2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at
4 the end and inserting “; and”; and

5 (3) by adding at the end the following:

6 “(3) to carry out section 1475(b), \$30,000,000
7 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030.”.

(b) INDIRECT COSTS.—Section 1477 of the National
Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy
Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3324) is amended by adding at
the end the following:

12 “(c) INDIRECT COSTS.—Of the funds made available
13 under subsection (a) to carry out this section for a fiscal
14 year, not more than 15 percent may be used for expenses
15 related to administering the program under this section.”.

16 SEC. 302. SHELLFISH RESEARCH UNDER AGRICULTURE
17 AND FOOD RESEARCH INITIATIVE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (b)(2)(B)(i) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 3157(b)(2)(B)(i)) is amended to read as follows:

21 “(i)(I) aquaculture; and

“(II) methods of increasing survival
rate and adaptability of shellfish, including
resistance to heat, disease, salinity, and
acidification;”.

1 (b) DEVELOPING NEXT GENERATION TECHNOLOGY
 2 FOR THE SEAFOOD AND AQUACULTURE INDUSTRIES.—
 3 Title IX of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act
 4 of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8101 et seq.) is amended by adding
 5 at the end the following:

6 **“SEC. 9015. DEVELOPING NEXT GENERATION TECHNOLOGY**
 7 **FOR THE SEAFOOD AND AQUACULTURE IN-**
 8 **DUSTRIES.**

9 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation
 10 with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall
 11 make competitive grants to eligible entities to develop next
 12 generation technology, which may include more efficient
 13 gear and equipment, to reduce pollution and fuel usage
 14 in the seafood and aquaculture industries.

15 “(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITY DEFINED.—In this section,
 16 the term ‘eligible entity’ includes a regional aquaculture
 17 center established under section 1475 of the National Ag-
 18 ricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act
 19 of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3322), institution of higher education,
 20 federally-funded research and development center, and an
 21 organization organization described in section 501(c)(5) of
 22 the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from tax-
 23 ation under section 501(a) of such Code.

1 “(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
2 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
3 \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030.”.

4 **SEC. 303. CROP INSURANCE POLICY FOR AQUACULTURE**
5 **PRODUCTS.**

6 Section 522(c) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of
7 1938 (7 U.S.C. 1522(c)) is amended by adding at the end
8 the following:

9 “(20) AQUACULTURE PRODUCTS.—

10 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Corporation shall
11 carry out research and development, or offer to
12 enter into 1 or more contracts with 1 or more
13 qualified persons to carry out research and de-
14 velopment, regarding a policy to insure aqua-
15 culture products.

16 “(B) AVAILABILITY.—The Corporation
17 shall establish a policy to insure aquaculture
18 products for the first reinsurance year that be-
19 gins after the date of the enactment of this
20 paragraph.”.

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