

Oysters Tasmania

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shellfish futures 2010 – getting down to business

shellfish futures 2010, the annual oyster industry conference, was successfully held on 10-11 September at Tidal Waters Resort, St Helens with over 80 delegates attending. The theme of shellfish futures 2010 was 'The Business of Oysters' with the program focused on making money in the oyster game.

The keynote speaker for day one of the conference was Jan Davis, CEO of the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association, talking about the Business of Agriculture in Tasmania. Jan challenged some of the misconceptions about agriculture emphasising that agriculture is a growth business with rising productivity, high skills and – in some cases – rising margins. Her presentation noted that Tasmania has a competitive advantage in supplying the global undersupply of food having the right combination of water, arable land, sunshine and highly skilled farmers and researchers.



Jan Davis, TFGA CEO

Money talks – and talks about money were popular. The business of money was the focus of a presentation from David Martin and Graeme Rooney of the National Australia Bank. Government support for business in Tasmania was the focus of a joint presentation from Stephen Cosgrove DEDTA and Sarah Jones from Enterprise Connect.

John Poke of Bouldans Bay Oysters told us what we need to measure on our oyster farms if we are to manage them properly. The emphasis of Jon's talk was that rather than looking at record keeping as an imposition, it should be thought of as an opportunity to gather information to help with business planning and operations and to determine our effectiveness as managers.

The day two keynote speaker was Heather Chong of Qew Orchards. Heather is an apricot grower in the Coal River Valley and the focus of her talk was on the similarities between growing apricots and oysters – namely high value, short season, and perishable products. Heather informed us about how land-based and marine farmers in the Coal River region have begun to liaise more closely and that by working together both industries can do better business, having much more political clout.

In a special oyster tasting workshop Conor Delahunty and Maeva Cochet from CSIRO, introduced us to the descriptive sensory evaluation method used to describe the sensory characteristics of an oyster constructed around appearance, odour, taste, flavour, texture and aftertaste. All conference participants were then given the opportunity to taste oysters from each of TAS, SA and NSW and to compare their sensory characteristics.

The final afternoon of shellfish futures was largely dedicated to key research of relevance to the oyster industry. Rachel King from the Seafood CRC Oyster Consortium provided a summary of the large range of projects being coordinated by the CRC – a highlight being the initial results of an investigation into market acceptability of fresh pre-packaged seafood products.

Agricultural Industry Workshop – MCPA in the Duck River

An industry workshop to review and discuss the identification of traces of the agricultural chemical MCPA in the Duck River has been organised jointly by DairyTas, TFGA and TAPG as an initiative to ensure that the best possible actions are being taken to address the issue. The workshop will be held on Tuesday 28 September 2010 at the Smithton Community & Recreation Centre.

The aim of the workshop is to better understand the issues around MCPA use and detection in the Duck River Catchment and to look at strategies to address them. Tom Lewis from Oysters Tasmania will be attending the workshop on behalf of industry and all members of the oyster industry have been invited to attend.

Odette Lennane to investigate carbon economy

Odette Lennane of Recherche Bay Oysters will be attending a Carbon Risks and Strategies course in London in November 2010, as part of winning the FRDC 2009 Peter Dundas-Smith Scholarship. Odette will also visit Glasgow to speak to sea food industry members about their preparedness in relation to carbon footprint labelling and its benefits relating to access to market share. She will also visit Calais to speak to oyster seafood industry members about their intention to register for carbon trading.



Odette Lennane, Recherche Bay Oysters

In undertaking her studies, Odette seeks to expand her understanding of legislation and policy including risks in relation to carbon trading. A key driver for Odette is seeking practical facts that can convert to increased sustainability and economic viability for all individual farmers as the backbone of the economy.

Odette is aiming to complete a report on her investigations by December 2010.

Climate Change adaptation in edible oyster industry Final Report

The NCCARF adaptation network activity investigating climate adaptation in the Australian edible oyster industry has released its final report. The report is a review and synthesis of knowledge about climate impacts, the potential to build adaptive capacity and resilience, and to define adaptation options within the Australian edible oyster industry.

The report focuses on the three main oyster growing states of NSW, SA and TAS. The full report, an executive summary and information sheet can be accessed at <http://arnmbr.org/content/index.php/site/aboutus/>. For further information or to request hard copies of these publications please contact Peat.Leith@utas.edu.au.

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