

Prince Edward Island Aquaculture Alliance Presidents Report for 2025

March 25th, 2026

Thank you all for taking the time to join us here today and for your continued support of the PEI Aquaculture Alliance!

The 2025 season was a deeply unsettling one for the oyster industry, with the detection of Dermo, and an increasing number of mortalities impacting the industry. As this crisis deepens and starts to affect more and more growers, the Alliance has continued to lobby on behalf of the industry for long-term, ongoing financial supports for growers. There will be rough waters ahead but over time we will overcome this setback and emerge with a stronger oyster sector through research and development of our own hatcheries and nurseries with MSX tolerant seed.

As an interim solution to this issue, the Atlantic Aqua Farms proposal to import disease resistant broodstock and seed from their US operations is something that our oyster grower and processor members have strongly supported this year.

The Alliance team, both the staff and the directors, have devoted a significant part of their time this year advocated on behalf of the oyster industry, often in partnership with the other associations representing the different aspects of the industry. These efforts have started to show some results in the establishment of two Provincially led support programs and some high-level Federal government attention to the question of broodstock and seed imports.

The Farmers of the Sea public trust campaign continues to expose our membership to tourists and community members who may not always understand what it takes to farm the product that is served on their plate.

The AFF/A-Tap program has now ended, providing funding to a significant number of oyster, mussel and finfish members. While we await news of the Atlantic Fisheries Fund renewal, the Alliance will continue to reach out and explore all potential funding sources that could assist the Island aquaculture industry.

The Alliance continues to offer training programs for members and their teams to build their knowledge, and skill sets in through the Aquaculture Training Program. This year that included free training in oyster nursery systems and hatcheries, something that was identified as a priority back in the 2024 MSX workshop.

We also continue to offer access to mental health support with certified counsellors, and I encourage everyone to remind your staff that this is a free, anonymous service that is available to them.

My deep appreciation goes out to our Executive Director, Peter Warris who has played an instrumental role over the past 19 years in with the Alliance and has been a great resource over the past year for myself and the membership as a whole. Our R&D Coordinator, Dr. Gaitée Joshua,

has quickly established herself as an effective program lead with the A-TAP, is learning more and more about all three sectors of the industry, and is rapidly developing new project and research proposals to address industry priorities.

I would like to welcome Fabiola Montes, our new Communication and Administrative Assistant to the Alliance. Again, Fabiola has rapidly made her mark with a dramatic increase in regular communication, updates and social media.

I would like to extend thanks from all of our board and membership to our team, as well as Jenny and Doug, for their ongoing contribution to our organization.

While the importance of our industry can sometimes feel overshadowed by other sectors or priorities, I would like to acknowledge and thank those in the public sector who are eager to listen, learn, and support our industry to advance and grow. Some have moved on, others have more recently come in, but we have a core group who have always been there for us both Provincially and Federally. Without their contributions the Alliance would be challenged to perform all the work that we do for the betterment of the entire aquaculture industry.

Our industry members are passionate, want to grow, and are among the most innovative and hard working anywhere in the Canada and abroad. I believe this is a recipe for success and we are poised for a bright future. The organization is in good financial shape, and we have a great group of board members and a team of professionals who will lead the Alliance into the future and work through the issues that are facing us today.

I thank each and every one of you who serve on boards and committees for your commitment to the organization and to each member and your team for your commitment to our great industry. I have made many great relationships and learned so much in my time on the Alliance Board, I am honoured to have had the opportunity to work with you all.

Best wishes to you all in the 2026 season and beyond!

Sincerely,

Monique Horne

President, Prince Edward Island Aquaculture Alliance