

TITLE 3: HUMAN RESOURCES
DIVISION 1: EDUCATION

§ 1361. Mandate.

The Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service shall be the Commonwealth's lead authority to develop and implement a Commonwealth Aquaculture Development Program consistent with the provisions of the U.S. National Aquaculture Act of 1980, 16 U.S.C. § 2801 et seq., as amended.

Source: PL 15-43, § 4 (101), modified.

Commission Comment: Public Law 15-43 was enacted on January 14, 2007, and contained the following pertinent sections in addition to severability and savings clauses. The Commission assigned different section numbers during codification than what was specified in the original text of PL 15-43 pursuant to its authority by 1 CMC § 3806.

Section 1. Title. This act may be cited as the "Commonwealth Aquaculture Development Act of 2006."

Section 2. Findings. The Legislature finds that the Commonwealth supply of seafood has greatly diminished through the years due to overfishing and over-harvesting. Although regulation and conservation of our marine resources are essential in ensuring the availability of such resources, alternative measures must be implemented to protect and preserve our marine resources. A robust aquaculture industry has the most potential to fill the seafood needs of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean and therefore has the great potential for developing a thriving aquaculture industry.

The Legislature further finds that 3 CMC § 1305 established that one of the main purposes and functions of the Northern Marianas College is to serve as the land-grant college in the Commonwealth in accordance with federal laws and to promote, develop and administer agricultural education programs, including but not limited to agricultural extension services and agricultural and aquacultural research. As a result, the Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service has been actively promoting and developing programs and research to assist our community. Such programs and research have assisted in the establishment of tilapia and shrimp cultivation.

The Legislature further finds that there are several federal grants including grants from the U.S. Department of Commerce and Department of Agriculture available for the Commonwealth to develop an aquaculture program, which the Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service have been taking advantage. Because of its success, the Legislature deems it appropriate to mandate that the Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service be established as the Commonwealth's lead authority to further develop the aquaculture industry and other related programs.

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Section 3. Aquaculture Policy. The Legislature declares that aquaculture has the potential for reducing the dependence of imported seafood, raising the availability and consumption of locally produced seafood, rebuilding depleted wild fisheries and marine species stocks through enhancement programs, reducing fishing pressure on marine resources, creating new employment opportunities in the processing and production of fishery products, and stimulating economic growth by creating a thriving aquaculture industry and promoting ecotourism in the Commonwealth. It is, therefore, in the best interest, and it is the Commonwealth's policy, to encourage and promote the development of aquaculture in the Commonwealth.