



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FIFTEENTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 2006

PUBLIC LAW NO. 15-43  
H. B. NO. 15-67, HS1

AN ACT

To mandate that the Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service shall be the Commonwealth's lead authority to establish a Commonwealth Aquaculture Development Program; and for other purposes.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE FIFTEENTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:**

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

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

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

18           The Legislature further finds that there are several federal grants including grants  
19 from the U.S. Department of Commerce and Department of Agriculture available for the  
20 Commonwealth to develop an aquaculture program, which the Northern Marianas College

1 Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service have been taking advantage.  
2 Because of its success, the Legislature deems it appropriate to mandate that the Northern  
3 Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service be established as  
4 the Commonwealth's lead authority to further develop the aquaculture industry and other  
5 related programs.

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

15 **Section 4. Commonwealth Aquaculture Development Program.**

16 **§ 101. Mandate.**

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

22 **§ 102. Commonwealth Aquaculture Development Plan.**

23 The Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension and  
24 Education Service shall establish a Commonwealth Aquaculture Development Plan.  
25 The plan shall include building and operating an aquaculture facility in the  
26 Commonwealth.

27 **§ 103. Coordination of Aquaculture Activities.**

28 In establishing the plan, the Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research  
29 Extension and Education Service shall consult and coordinate its efforts with the  
30 Department of Commerce, the Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Division

1 of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Public Lands, representatives of the local  
2 aquaculture industry, and other appropriate local government agencies, and federal  
3 agencies.

4 **Section 5. Severability.** If any provision of this Act or the application of any such  
5 provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent  
6 jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to persons or  
7 circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

8 **Section 6. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be  
9 construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes  
10 repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers  
11 contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior law.  
12 The enactment of the Act shall not have the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying,  
13 any liability, civil or criminal, which shall already be in existence on the date this Act  
14 becomes effective.

15 **Section 7. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the  
16 Governor or becoming law without such approval.

CERTIFIED BY:

ATTESTED TO BY:

/S/ \_\_\_\_\_

**JUSTO S. QUITUGUA**  
ACTING SPEAKER  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

/S/ \_\_\_\_\_

**EVELYN C. FLEMING**  
HOUSE CLERK

**APPROVED on this 14<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2007**

/S/ \_\_\_\_\_

**BENIGNO R. FITIAL**  
GOVERNOR  
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS