In 2016, the South Coastal Ponds represented...

- **68.8%** of RI’s aquaculture oysters.
- **47%** of RI’s aquaculture acreage.
- **100%** of RI’s aquaculture littlenecks.
- **$3,635,607** in wholesale value of oysters produced.

**Aquaculture by Acre**

Following is the percent of each pond’s acreage that is leased to aquaculture use.

- Winnapaug ............... 3.0%
- Quonochontaug .......... 1.0
- Ninigret .................. 3.5
- Green Hill ............... 0.0
- Trustom .................. 0.0
- Cards ........................ 0.0
- Potter ........................ 2.1
- Point Judith ............. 4.2

**Local Jobs in 2016**

- 33 full-time, year round
- 25 full-time, seasonal
- 20 part-time, year round
- 21 part-time, seasonal

Aquaculture in the South Coastal Ponds is managed by Rhode Island’s Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) with assistance from the state’s Department of Environmental Management (DEM). To see exact locations of all approved aquaculture leases in Rhode Island, visit DEM’s Map Room at http://ridemgis.maps.arcgis.com. For further information about aquaculture, visit CRMC at http://www.crmc.ri.gov/aquaculture.

Information in this flyer has been provided by the RI’s Coastal Resources Management Council, RI’s Department of Environmental Management and the Salt Ponds Coalition.
An Overview of Shellfish Aquaculture

The Annual Cycle

Spring
Seed is purchased; new seed is obtained every year, which gives the farmer a rolling supply of shellfish at different stages of growth.

Summer
Animals are cleaned and sorted by size a few times; bio-fouling is removed from gear.

Fall
Animals are cleaned, sorted, and “put to bed” for winter.
Harvesting occurs as animals attain marketable size throughout the year.

Techniques and Gear Used by Shellfish Farmers

Direct bottom plant
Individual animals are placed on or directly into the sediment (no gear).

Rack and bag
Shellfish are placed in a bag, which is then placed on a rack that is typically open-topped. Stackable racks are also open-topped. Racks rest on a clean, firm surface on the bottom in shallow water, where farmers can walk out to them.

Cage
Resembling a lobster pot, the enclosure varies in size and has shelves for the bags of shellfish; it may rest on the bottom in shallow water or be attached to a buoy and hauled up from deeper water. The cage bottom holds a specific substrate.

Suspended
Commonly found in deeper water, a line is suspended by a buoy and anchored. Shellfish are hung off the line, in cages or on ropes. This gear is always below the water’s surface and may be used anywhere, with any substrate type.

Floating
Highly visible, floating cages, bags, and/or Taylor floats (a rack that cannot flip over) are filled with oysters and anchored. This gear may be used anywhere, with any substrate type.

Flip bags
An anchored, T-shaped system made of PVC and threaded line that uses tidal currents to tumble and turn attached bags of oysters. The bags are also submerged and exposed by tidal flows. This gear is a relatively new innovation for Rhode Island waters.