

# NOTICE

**CRD NOTICE: 12-04**

## **BLUE CRAB FISHERY RESOURCE DISASTER FUNDING PROJECT**

### **NOTICE OF INVITATION FOR BLUE CRAB INDUSTRY PARTICIPANTS TO PRODUCE “SPAT ON SHELL” FOR THE PRODUCTION OF OYSTERS ON PRIVATE GROUNDS FOR THE 2012 OYSTER REPLENISHMENT PROGRAM**

The process to produce oysters on private grounds using hatchery produced larvae which is set on shell (“spat on shell”) is now relatively well established in Virginia waters. Both crab harvesters and crab processors should be able to transition into spat on shell production if they have access to private ground leases. There are currently thousands of acres of private oyster grounds in Virginia, which have potential for “spat on shell” production. Many of these leases are held by crab industry participants and many others could be subleased from current leaseholders that have become inactive. The MRC Conservation and Replenishment Department will assist interested crab harvesters and processors in identifying private lease areas that are suitable for oyster production. This program will be available for crab harvesters and crab processors at three (3) different levels that will depend on the amount of equipment and water access that an interested person might have. The allotments for each participant will be based on 600 bushels of “spat on shell” production.

#### **Tier 1**

Crabber or processor with shore property access to bay water for setting up a 3,000 gallon tank, but with no current equipment. The participant would have access to a private oyster ground lease, and the ability to bag, transport, and plant 600 bushels of shell per year in 200 bushel setting events. Funds available for each Tier 1 participant are:

Tank, pump, air blower	\$ 5,000
Shells for “spat on shell” bags, 600 bushels @ \$1.00/ bushel	\$ 600
Triploid eyed oyster larvae, 42 million @ \$265/million	\$11,130
Shells for preparing oyster grounds 1,200 bushels @ \$1.00/bushel	\$ 1,200
Total	\$17,930

#### **Tier II**

Crabber or processor without access to the shoreline adjacent to Bay waters for a setting tank, but with the ability to rent tank space from another person with a setting tank (currently there are at least 25 locations around the Bay with setting tanks). The interested person should have access to a private lease and the ability to bag, transport, and plant 600 bushels of shell per year in 200 bushel setting events. Funds available for the Tier II, participants, are:

Shells for “spat on shell” bags, 600 bushels @ \$1.00/bushel	\$ 600
Triploid eyed oyster larvae, 42 million @ \$265/million	\$11,130

Shells for preparing oyster grounds, 1,200 bushels	
\$1.00/bushel	\$ 1,200
Rent of tank space, \$1.50/bu. for 600 bushels	\$ 900
Total	\$13,830

**Tier III**

Crabbers or processors that already have setting tanks and with access to private leased grounds. The participants must have the ability to bag, transport, and plant 600 bushels of shells per year in 200 bushel setting events. Funds available for Tier III participants are:

Shells for “spat on shell” bags, 600 bushels @	
\$1.00/bushel	\$ 600
Triploid eyed oyster larvae, 42 million @	
\$265/million	\$11,130
Shells for preparing oyster grounds, 1,200 bushels	
@ \$1.00/bushel	\$ 1,200
Total	\$12,930

The Conservation and Replenishment Department will assist interested crab industry participants in determining the best set up and location for potential setting stations, and the best potential location for spat on shell growout. Total funding for this project is \$400,000 and the number of participants will depend on the number of qualified participants that request funding in each tier. Priority will be given to crab industry participants that have not participate in other Crab Disaster Funding Projects. If more qualified participants apply for this project than funds are available, there will be a lottery to select the funded participants.

**THE COMMISSION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE CHANGES IN THE PROGRAM AT ANY TIME.**

**GENERAL:**

To participate, each participant must have a current (2012) crab gear license.

Applicants must indicate which tier level that they wish to apply, and provide a written description of their setting location, private lease area, and evidence of ability to bag, handle, and deploy 600 bushels of oyster shells.

A “Practical Manual for Remote Setting in Virginia”, is available on the Virginia Institute of Marine science website at [www.vims.edu/adv](http://www.vims.edu/adv) or from the VMRC website at [www.mrc.virginia.gov](http://www.mrc.virginia.gov). Interested persons should consult this manual before applying for this spat on shell program to determine whether you have the ability to participate in this project.

Standard Virginia bushels of clean, aged oyster or hard clam shell must be loaded into mesh bags at the rate of 2 to 3 bags per bushel and be ready for inspection by MRC personnel prior to receiving larvae.

Selected participants will provide all of the labor required to load and unload bagged shells from setting tanks between May 1, 2012 and September 15, 2012.

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According to procedures described in the “Practical Manual for Remote Setting in Virginia”, tanks at setting stations will be filled with local bay waters, provided with aeration, and be maintained through a short husbandry period of 7 to 10 days before the shells are removed from the tank, and the shell bags transported to the planting area where bags are broken and spread on the bottom.

VMRC personnel will supervisor the deployment of all oysters and shells on the leased areas. VIMS and VMRC personnel will provide assistance to participants to optimize the probability of success.

VMRC will purchase the shells and larvae for each participant for each set, but participants must provide all of the required labor. Payments will be made upon receipt of proper documentation by the Conservation and Replenishment Department office, and verification of registration of the contractor with the Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprises, as a small, woman, or minority owned company. Payment will be made to the contractors within 15 days. Before any payments can be made, a contract and current tax form (W-9) will have to be completed and on file at the Marine Resources Commission main office. Checks will be forwarded by mail.

**RESPONSE DEADLINE:**

Funding is available to allow up to 30 applicants to participate. Crab industry license holders that are interested in participating in this project should contact the Conservation and Replenishment Department in writing either by mail, fax, or e-mail no later than 12:00 pm. Friday, March 30, 2012.

Information required: Name, Address, and a Virginia Commercial Registration License Number, and a current (2012) crab gear license. Please provide the lease number for the private ground you intend to use, or provide the closest geographic area of interest so that we might assist in locating a growout area.

**LOTTERY:**

All applicants will be ranked based on the description provided, and the tier selected. Priority will be given to applicants that have not been involved with other Crab Disaster Funding Projects. The Virginia Marine Resources Commission has \$400,000 of crab disaster funding available for this project. If more applications are received than funding is available, a lottery will be held on Friday, March 30, 2012 at 1:00 p.m. at the VMRC Conservation and Replenishment Department on the 3rd floor. The building address: VMRC, 2600 Washington Avenue, Newport News, Virginia. The lottery will be open to those individuals who wish to be present during the drawing.

**CONTACT PERSON:**

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