



Winter 2009

“News, research updates, and information on lobsters and the lobster industry.”

Published by the Lobster Institute

“Protecting and conserving the lobster resource, and enhancing lobstering as an industry...and a way of life.”

Lobster Institute to Host 2009 Canadian/U.S. Lobstermen's Town Meeting – March 27-28

The Lobster Institute will host its sixth consecutive Canadian/U.S. Lobstermen's Town Meeting in St. John, New Brunswick on March 27 – 28. The event is an industry-wide gathering of lobstermen and other interested parties to discuss the status of the lobster resource (*Homarus americanus*) and the industry – from the perspective of the fishermen.

These Canadian/U.S. Lobstermen's Town Meetings have alternated between the U.S. and Canada each year. All meetings have been well attended, with participants representing all geographic areas of the fishery, and coming from as far south as Florida and as far north as Newfoundland.

This year, the Town Meeting will return to Canada and be held at the Hilton Saint John, in St. John, New Brunswick.

Based on the recommendation of the Institute's Board of Advisors, the Planning Committee selected **“The Future Status of the Resource: What is on the Horizon?”** as the primary topic of the 2009 meeting. Likely sub-topics will include:

- water quality
 - environmental contaminants (pesticides, heavy metals, etc.)
 - cruise ships
 - oil spills
- offshore drilling
- offshore wind farms
- stock enhancement efforts
- health monitoring initiatives
- others

As always, the Town Meeting is designed first and foremost to allow fishermen's voices to be heard. The goals have remained the same: to provide fishermen with an opportunity to share with one another what they are observing in their day-to-day operations, what their concerns might be, and what positive things they are seeing. This will allow fishermen to get a more complete

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Lobster Health Coalition Takes Shape

They came from around New England and as far away as Louisiana, South Carolina, and Prince Edward Island. Twenty-five of the top scientist involved in research related to lobster health all joined together on February 6 at the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Annual Weekend & Trade Show in Hyannis, Massachusetts to start shaping the newly formed Lobster Health Coalition.

A component of its C.O.R.E. Initiative, the Lobster Institute was able to make the Lobster Health Coalition a reality this year thanks to a modest federal appropriation of \$178,000 received in September 2008 through NOAA. The stated objectives are “To form a Lobster Health Coalition with membership to include scientists and industry representatives from throughout the lobster fishing regions of the Northeast U.S. and Atlantic Canada. The Coalition will work to collect baseline lobster health data, and encourage a logical progression of research to address lobster health issues – bringing together and building upon work already done or in progress, thus avoiding duplication and proceeding as quickly and efficiently as possible.”

Deborah Bouchard, manager of the Maine Aquatic Animal Health Lab at the University of Maine and an experienced microbiologist, has been tapped as the director of the Lobster Health Coalition. “A successful

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5763 Rogers Hall, Room #210
The University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5763
Phone: 207-581-2751 Fax: 207-581-2744

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Cathy Billings, Editor

cathy.billings@umit.maine.edu

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If we inadvertently left someone off this list, or printed any name incorrectly, we apologize. Please notify us so that we may post a correction.

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– businesses, foundations and individuals –
who supported the work of the
Lobster Institute in calendar year 2008.*

We look forward to your continued support in 2009.

(List does not include donors to the C.O.R.E. Campaign.)

Check out the Lobster Institute website
at www.lobsterinstitute.org,
providing the definitive site for lobster
information with nearly 200 links.



RESEARCH REPORT

Readers may contact the Lobster Institute for more detailed information on any of these projects.

❖ Lobster Enhancement Efforts Discussed –

According to a February 17, 2009 Internet posting by BYM Marine & Maritime News, Queensland, Australia hopes to be a world leader in lobster aquaculture with the establishment of a partnership in tropical rock lobster research and breeding between the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPI&F) and Lobster Harvest Pty Ltd.

Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries Tim Mulherin said the collaborators would work together to become world leaders in commercially viable hatchery technologies. "DPI&F has a 10-year history of tropical rock lobster aquaculture research and development and is already a world leader in rock-lobster larval-rearing research," the Minister said. "On December 6 last year, we saw our first baby lobster produced from eggs managed through the larval stages in our tanks at the Northern Fisheries' Centre, a breakthrough for tropical rock lobster development in Queensland. The ultimate goal is developing a commercial lobster hatchery."

The MG Kailis Group first produced tropical rock lobster juveniles in June 2006 at its research facility in Exmouth, becoming the first organisation in the world to do so. This successful propagation was replicated in 2007 and 2008 with the earlier juveniles being grown-out to adult lobsters. [Excerpt from *Australia*:

Major Lobster Breeding Deal Hatched in Cairns.
BYM Marine & Maritime News <http://www.bymnews.com/news/newsDetails.php?id=50972>

❖ Study on Economic Impact of Joint Canadian/U.S. Marketing of Lobster on Tap –

Catherine Lessard, a graduate student in Resource Economics and Policy at The University of Maine, will be conducting a research project over the next few months that will look at the economic impacts of a joint marketing program for the Canadian & U.S. lobster industries. She is currently updating a research project evaluating if the Canadian lobster imports pattern is optimal for the North American lobster industry. Her research is financed by a fellowship from the Canadian American Center at The University of Maine. Catherine is originally from Sherbrooke, Canada. She graduated from Université Laval (Québec) in Agricultural Economics and Management.

❖ Lobster Science Presentations Available Online –

The Atlantic Veterinary College's Lobster Science Centre, at the University of Prince Edward Island, reports that presentations given at its 4th Annual Lobster Science Workshop are available online at www.lobsterscience.ca/workshop/presentations.htm.

Canadian/U.S. Lobstermen's Town Meeting

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picture of the entire resource, including commonalities, differences and potential future impacts; and will foster collaboration and communication between all geographic areas of the fishery, thus reinforcing the fact that all share and rely on a common resource that must be protected.

A special thank you to **Darden Restaurants** for serving as primary sponsor of the Town Meeting each and every year; and to **Fishery Products International**, who has sponsored the Seafood Reception each year. We also thank our other 2009 sponsors: **Downeast Lobstermen's Association, East Coast/Paturel, Lobster Gram, Maine Import/Export Lobster Dealer's Association, the Maine Salt Company, and Riverdale Mills.**

Please see the ad to the immediate right for more details and registration information. Fishermen should contact their lobster associations for possible car-pool opportunities. ❖

Canadian/U.S. LOBSTERMEN'S TOWN MEETING

The 2009 focus is
"The Status of the Resource - What's on the Horizon?"

**Friday March 27, 9:00 – 4:00 &
Saturday March 28, 9:00 – 11:30**

Hilton St. John – St. John, New Brunswick
Special room rate of \$109(CA) for reservations
made before 3/13. Call 506-693-8484

Hosted by the: **Lobster Institute**
with primary sponsorship from
Darden Restaurants
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**\$25 Registration Fee – includes lunch
for pre-registered participants only.**

Forms are available by calling 207-581-1443
or online at www.lobsterinstitute.org

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LOBSTER INSTITUTE

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Lobster Health Coalition

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Coalition will be instrumental in helping us learn about current and rapidly emerging diseases. Knowing what they are and how they spread may provide industry management tools to lessen the impact, thus helping secure the future viability of the lobster fishery,” said Bouchard. “The intent is to link scientists involved with lobster health research with one another, and with the industry. The Coalition will serve as a communications channel to keep each other up-to-date on one another’s research – to help build collaborative efforts and share resources whenever possible.”

In addition to forging the Coalition, a small amount of research funding was made available to obtain baseline data on the microbial health of lobsters regionwide. The following well-known research experts have agreed to lend their talents to this project: Together with Bouchard, Dr. Anne Lichtenwalner, Director of the Maine Aquatic Animal Health Lab; Dr. Mark Fast of Stony Brook University – representing the Long Island Sound area; Dr. Roxanna Smolowitz of the New England Aquarium – representing the Massachusetts area; and Dr. Kathleen Castro of University of Rhode

Island Sea Grant.

As a result of the Long Island Sound lobster die off in 1999, and an increased prevalence of lobster shell disease in the early 2000s, the idea of forging a lobster health coalition was first raised by the Lobster Institute in April 2004. At that time, a meeting was called by the Lobster Institute to discuss the emerging shell disease problem in the lobster fishery. Representatives from all of the major lobster industry associations throughout New England and New York, as well as several scientists attended the meeting. The intent was to lay the groundwork for organizing a shell disease coalition to tackle this problem in a coordinated way. While the immediacy of the need to address the shell disease issue was evident, what also became apparent was the desire to have a coalition with a broader view to deal with all issues related to lobster health and environmental interrelationships.

Since that time, through the efforts of Dr. Castro and Rhode Island Sea Grant, funding was obtained for extensive research on lobster shell disease through the New England Lobster Research Initiative (NELRI). The Lobster Health Coalition will build on the successful collaborative model of the NILRI and expand the scope to take a more comprehensive look at lobster health.

We now have a few more months to meet the MTAF Challenge – to raise matching funds from the lobster industry for the Lobster Institute & its partner’s efforts to obtain a \$5 million grant for a new building and lab space. (See Fall 2008 Bulletin) Even just \$10 per fisherman voices strong moral support. Please contribute today.

- ☐ Enclosed is my check (payable to the MTAF Challenge – UMF) for \$ _____
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