

## 2018 Oyster Growers' Forum on Blister Worm Impacts

Date: Thursday, October 25, 2018

Location: Harborview Conference Room, County Complex, 3195 Main St (Rt 6A), Barnstable, MA

Time: 6:30pm – 8:00pm

Polychaete worms in the genus *Polydora* continue to be of concern to oyster producers in the northeastern US; heavy infestations can cause reduced growth and condition, while producers are concerned about marketability of infested oysters and incur costs in managing the problem. While some management measures have shown promise in reducing the frequency or degree of blister worm infestation on individual farms, growers still have many basic questions relating to *Polydora* biology and ecology and the implications for husbandry measures.

A producers' survey, sponsored by the USDA Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program and designed by Dr. Paul Rawson (University of Maine) and Dana Morse (Maine Sea Grant, and University of Maine Cooperative Extension), was distributed to growers between Maine and Virginia. The survey investigated several aspects of the issue: influences of the physical environment on infestation rates and severity; influences of gear type and production system; the level of industry concern with respect to potential or realized impacts to the crop or in the market; feedback from producers on effectiveness of various remedies; and suggestions for additional work that would lead to more workable solutions.

This meeting will review the results of the survey, and will be a forum for discussion of associated issues, including seed transfers and biosecurity, new observations on effective husbandry options, and mechanisms to aggregate observations from industry and science as tools to work toward solutions.

Mileage reimbursement is available for attendees.

An RSVP is helpful; please call or write to:

Dr. Paul Rawson, University of Maine: 207.581.4326 or [prawson@maine.edu](mailto:prawson@maine.edu)

or

Josh Reitsma, Cape Cod Cooperative Extension: 508.375.6950 or [jreitsma@whoi.edu](mailto:jreitsma@whoi.edu)