

Building Partnerships for a new Virginia Seafood AREC



A conceptual architectural rendering of the new Virginia Seafood AREC

From deep-water fishermen and Chesapeake Bay crabbers to seafood distributors and the booming aquaculture industry, the impact and reach of the commonwealth's seafood industry is vast. With an annual economic impact of more than \$550 million, the Virginia seafood industry accounts for more than 5,600 jobs and increases diversity in the state's economic portfolio.

At the heart of the industry is the Virginia Seafood Agricultural Research and Extension Center. The AREC is a vital source of information that helps the industry thrive in an increasingly competitive global market. The AREC's mission is to research and create the most vital and current technologies and techniques in the seafood industry and to share that knowledge with the industry and partners who need it to succeed.

Since 1975, we have been housed in a refurbished oyster processing building at the water's edge in Hampton. It has served us well since that time, however the building is rapidly deteriorating.

In order to remain current, Virginia Tech must have more modern, up-to-date facilities to help the commonwealth continue to be a global leader in seafood research, aquaculture, and food safety.

We are actively seeking partnerships to help us build a new AREC and a successful future that allows the seafood industry to continue to flourish.



“Here at the Virginia Seafood AREC, we view ourselves as partners with the seafood industry, and we constantly work together to find ways to help it succeed and remain sustainable. New facilities will allow us to continue to do so in a way that best benefits our partners for years to come.”

– Michael Schwarz
Director
Virginia Seafood AREC

A New Virginia Seafood Agricultural Research and Extension Center

New facilities for the Virginia Seafood AREC will help businesses and the economy through:

Workforce training – Working with industry, the AREC will ensure that workers have the most current skills available to help grow the seafood industry and remain in regulatory compliance.

Domestic seafood safety and security – The AREC will enhance domestic seafood volume while maximizing product quality and safety for the consumer.

Economic development – The AREC will develop partnerships that help build a growing and vibrant seafood industry for years to come.

Conservation programing – Through new ornamental aquaculture programs, the AREC will help to boost revenues while protecting natural environments.

Food safety – The AREC will train workers to ensure that food products are safe and healthy for consumers, which increases the producers' bottom lines.

“A modern, technologically advanced Virginia Seafood AREC is vital to keeping our industry viable and competitive for years to come. We rely on the AREC's team of experts to help us be national and global leaders in sustainable seafood production.”

– Johnny Graham, President/Owner (4th generation)
Graham and Rollins Seafood Inc.
Hampton, Virginia

Building a shared future

We are seeking partners to help fund the new facility, which will help grow the seafood industry for decades to come. The comprehensive \$10 million project would be located at 102 South King Street in Hampton. This new facility will have expanded seafood processing and microbiological laboratories, upgraded food fish and ornamental research facilities and water chemistry labs, expanded classrooms, outreach and training facilities, and additional workstations and housing for visiting faculty, students, and industry collaborators.

For more information on how you can become a partner in the shared future of the Virginia seafood industry, please contact

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