

Maine worm grower, halibut farm each looking to expand operations

FRANKLIN, ME – Two aquaculture operations currently housed at the University of Maine's Center for Cooperative Aquaculture Research (CCAR) are each looking to expand in the coming months.

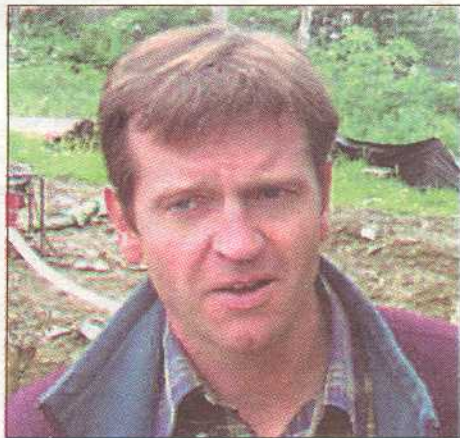
Seabait Maine LLC, which raises sandworms for the bait and fish feed markets, plans to double its full time workforce from 6 to 12 people and substantially expand the size of its production facility in a two-phase, multi-year construction project.

The company also employs part time staff and will reportedly be expanding that workforce, as well.

Currently housed in 12,500 square feet of space it leases from the university, Seabait is planning to build a 54,000-square-foot facility on adjacent university property under a long-term lease agreement.

Seabait Maine is a subsidiary of Seabait Ltd., based in the UK.

In a related development, another CCAR tenant, Maine Halibut Farms, is currently investigating the possibility of expanding its land-based, recirculating facility onto a section of former US Navy property in the Maine shoreside town of Corea.



Stephen Rappaport photo

CCAR operations manager, Nick Brown.

The University of Maine is scheduled to take ownership of the former Navy property soon, then transfer it to a nonprofit economic development agency.

Maine Halibut has floated a proposal to occupy part of the site, expanding its farm using seawater from nearby Frenchman Bay via a buried intake pipe, if the project moves forward.

Company officials have estimated the expanded fish farm could create nearly 20 local jobs when operating at full production. */ffn/*