National Sea Grant Seaweed Hub Processing Work Group

Graduate Hotel

11 Dorrance St, Providence, RI 02903

Work Group Report

Goal 1 (Education): Educated US producers and consumers

Objective 1: Educate industry to identify emerging markets to utilize new species and uses for sea vegetables

Objective 2: Create programs to share information about existing technology and harvesting techniques with sea vegetable growers

Objective 3: Promote domestic consumption of domestic sea vegetables

Objective 4: Develop a system(s) to develop standards for processing by growers and safe handling by consumers who utilize fresh sea vegetable

Objective 5: Develop processor business model to ensure economic viability of these facilities

Objective 6: Increase public awareness about nutritional, environmental, and other benefits

Low Hanging Fruit

Task: Education program targeting the general public and culinary professionals about the variety and sea vegetable preparations (recipes)

Outcome: Fact sheets, webinar, podcasts, etc.

Goal 2 (Technology): Ensure innovations in processing are readily available to the industry

Objective 1: Research cultivation technology for new species

Objective 2: Facilitate product innovation by identifying existing and new processing technology
· Helping to identify where this demand exists in the industry

Objective 3: Improve processing technology and expand these capabilities

Objective 4: Researching and promote sea vegetables as a substitute for plastics, wax lined boxes, etc. presently being used as packaging

Objective 5: Establish processing specifications for different sea vegetable products

Objective 5: Develop standardized parameter testing across the industry e.g., nutrient content, water quality, etc.

Objective 6: Research new species that may be conducive to changing climate and develop cultivars

· Germ plasma collection

Low Hanging Fruit

· Task 1: Research cultivation technology for new species
· Task 2: Research product innovation by identify existing and new processing technology

Goal 3 (Operations): Establish and economically sustainable industry for processing sea vegetable

Objective 1: Identify emerging markets to utilize domestic sea vegetables e.g, nutracueticals

Objective 2: Invest in research product development and innovation that will support expansion and growth of the domestic sea vegetable industry

Objective 3: Facilitate dialogue between sea vegetable producers and managers to establish policies for Carbon/Nitrogen credit programs

Objective 4: Provide informational resources and expertise to assist sea vegetable producers to establish cooperatives

Objective 5: Provide guidance and advice to address transportation challenges that presently serve as barriers and impedes post-harvest production

Objective 6: Develop solutions and strategies for storing sea vegetables to extend the shelf life

· Drying and other methods

Objective 7: Develop decision tress for standards that will be appropriate for various sea vegetables

Objective 8: Compile information and resources to develop a processing business model

Objective 9: Develop Best Management Practices (BMPs) for handling practices to be sued for different sea vegetable species, which may vary with the intended use for these products

Low Hanging Fruit

· Conduct research and development into using sea vegetables as mixed ingredients products e.g., sea weed pasta, salt and pepper 'flavoring', etc.
· Invest in feasibility study to recommend a framework to establish a Regional Processing Model that can be adapted by different states

Technical Work Group Conduct

· Establish three subcommittees to address (3) goals that have been established, composition as follows:

- o Captain/lead
- o Captain works with committee to solve problems/address issues identified for the goal
- o Conference calls used to present solutions

· Future attempts by work group to prioritize goals (i.e., online survey) and identify anticipated impacts

· Each sub-committee meets once per quarter, initially and decide about need to increase frequency; most likely establish set day of week (e.g., 3rd Wednesday)