

Recent Updates in Inland Bays' Shellfish Aquaculture

CIB STAC 2/6/2026



Recent updates include:

- Delaware Aquaculture Task Force
- Regulation Amendments
- 2024 Aquaculture Statistics



Delaware Aquaculture Task Force

- Continuing dialogue from multiple stakeholder groups
- Recommendations for amendments to Delaware Administrative Code
- Discussions about commercial dock space possibilities in the Inland Bays

7 DE Admin. C. 3801 amendments

[Delaware Regulations - Administrative Code](#)

- Effective June 11, 2025
- Additions to Definitions “shellfish hatchery” and “Department”
- 11.7 That shellfish aquaculture gear attached to a line suspended between poles does not require individual buoys if the poles are spaced no more than 10’ apart and each pole extends no less than 2’ above MHW.
- Alterations to importation regarding in state vs. out of state distribution.
- Amending active use requirements.
 - Planting requirements begin the year the lease reaches 36 months and lessees must plant 50k/acre/year.
 - Harvest requirements begin the year the lease reaches 48 months and lessees must harvest 2,000 oysters/acre/year or 5,000 clams/acre/year

2024 Leases and Participants

- 11 Commercial leases; 1 scientific
 - 10 lessees commercial
- 24 acres leased. All in Rehoboth Bay



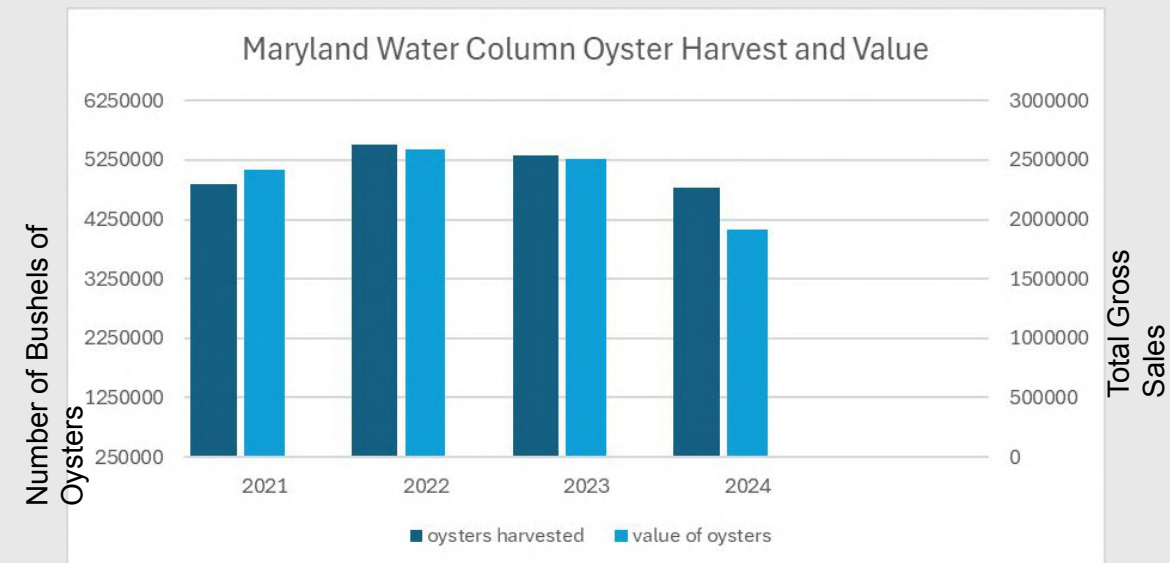
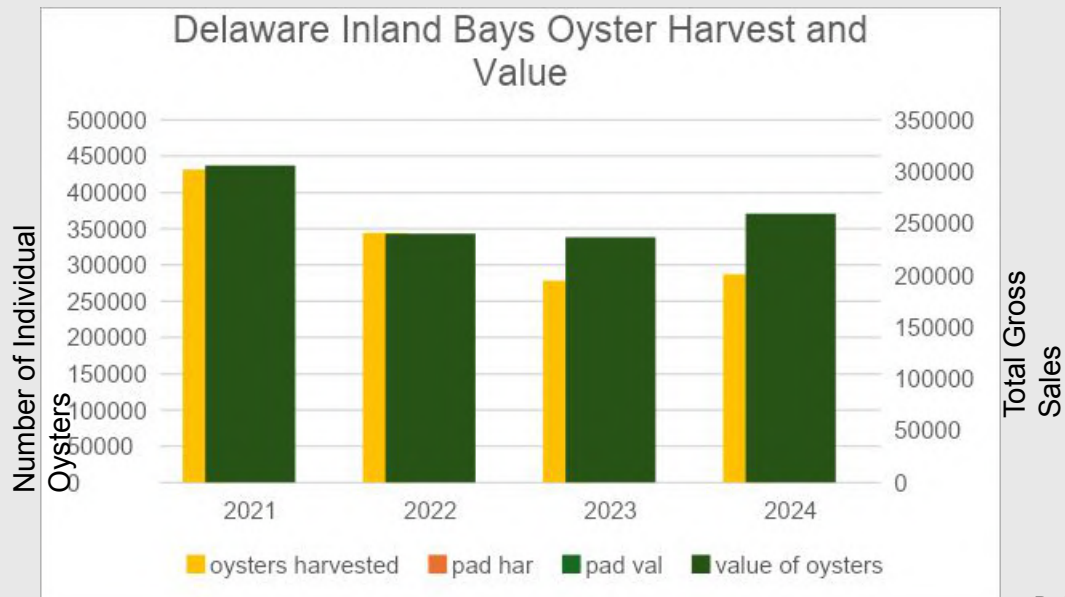
Planting

- 1,215,000 oysters commercially planted.
 - A decrease of 471,600 from 2023.
 - 52,826 oysters planted per acre leased (down from 84,330 the previous year).



Harvest

- Total harvest in 2024 was 287,143 oysters. Slight increase of harvest from calendar year 2023 (+8985 oysters).
 - Number of oysters harvested per acre leased decreased from 2023. 12,484 oysters/acre leased vs. 13,908 oysters/acre leased.
 - The highest harvest in IB was recorded in 2021 (431,589).

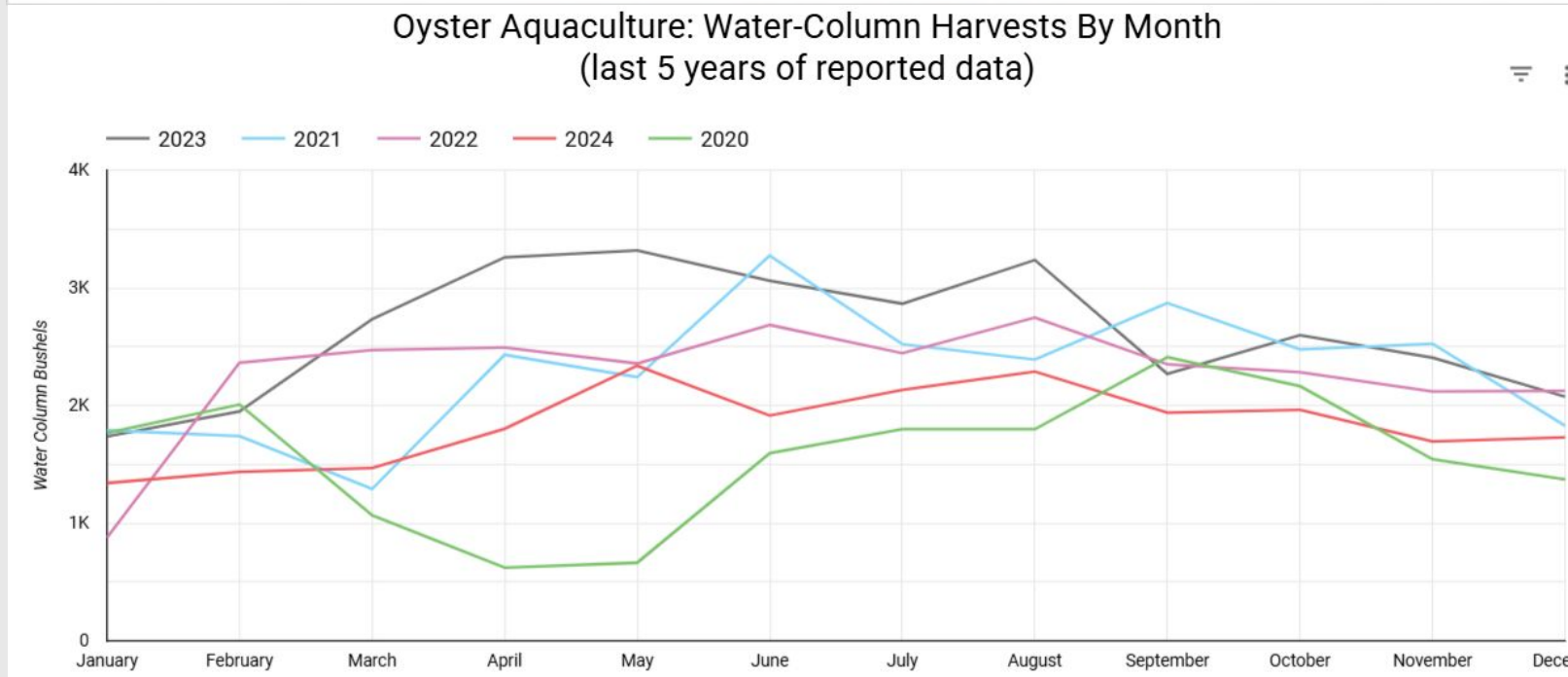
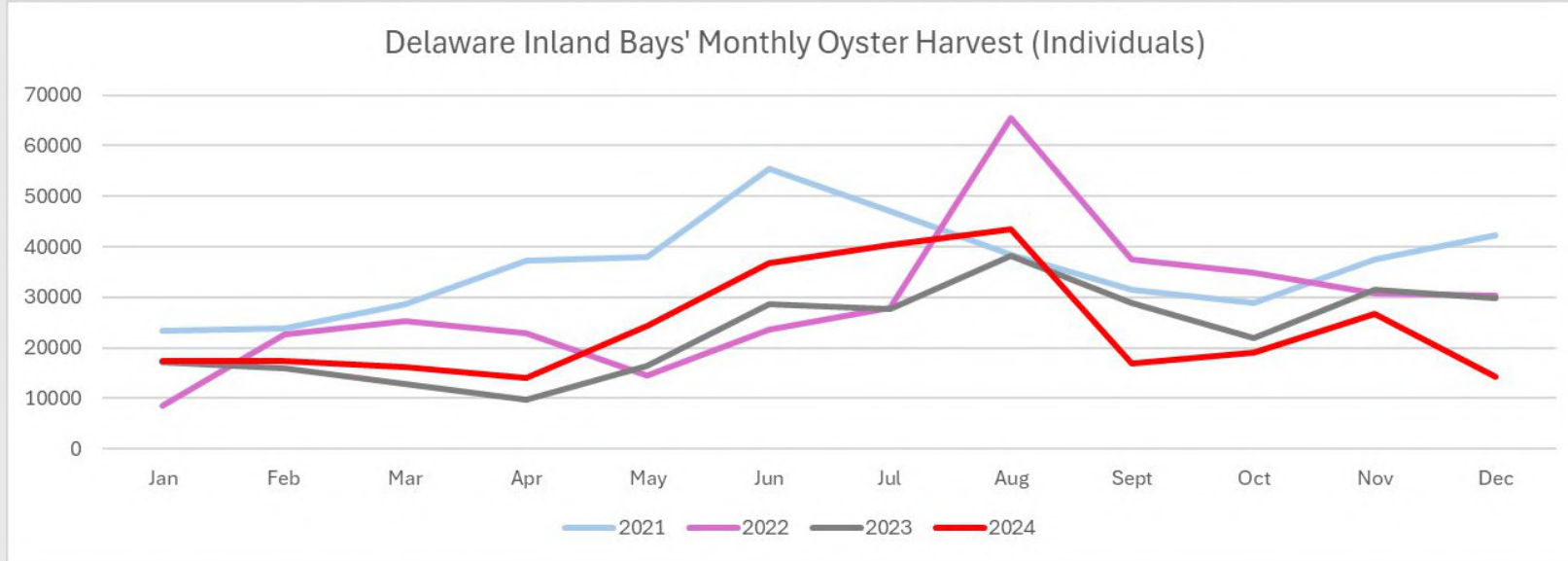


Monthly sales

Table 1. Inland Bays shellfish aquaculture oysters harvested, by month and yearly total for 2021-2024. The number of lessees reporting harvest each month in 2024 is also included.

Month	2021 Oyster Harvest	2022 Oyster Harvest	2023 Oyster Harvest	2024 Oyster Harvest	# Lessees harvesting 2024
January	23,461	8,410	17,084	17,269	7
February	23,727	22,758	15,865	17,454	6
March	28,517	25,229	12,742	16,240	6
April	37,200	22,817	9,616	14,149	5
May	37,890	14,408	16,367	24,395	7
June	55,320	23,598	28,614	30,006	6
July	47,001	27,896	27,676	40,341	6
August	38,328	65,587	38,250	43,573	6
September	31,475	37,412	28,766	16,972	5
October	28,835	34,944	22,025	19,039	5
November	37,525	30,742	31,397	26,825	7
December	42,310	30,200	29,756	14,190	5
Yearly Total	431,589	344,001	278,158	287,143	

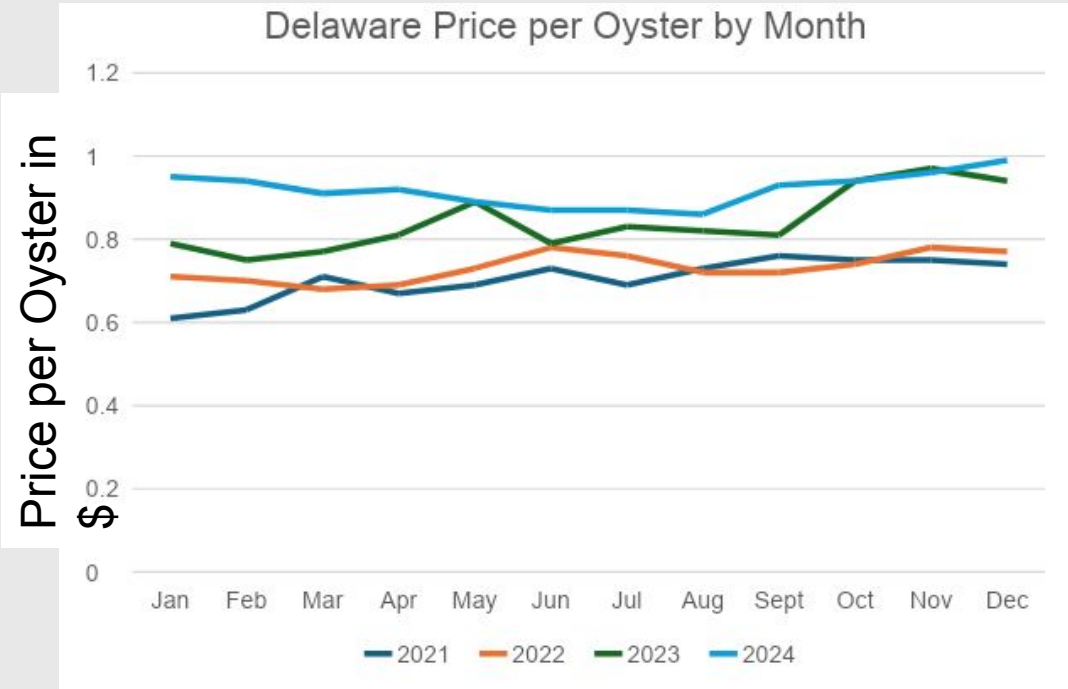
Monthly Harvest



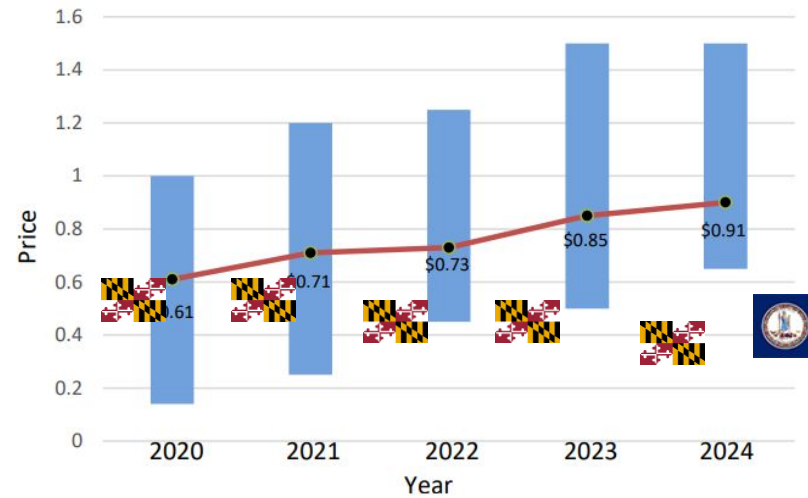
Price per month

Table 2. Inland Bays shellfish aquaculture oysters with weighted average dockside price paid per oyster, by month and by year for 2021-2024.

Month	2021 Oyster Price	2022 Oyster Price	2023 Oyster Price	2024 Oyster Price
January	\$0.61	\$0.71	\$0.79	\$0.95
February	\$0.63	\$0.70	\$0.75	\$0.94
March	\$0.71	\$0.68	\$0.77	\$0.91
April	\$0.67	\$0.69	\$0.81	\$0.92
May	\$0.69	\$0.73	\$0.89	\$0.89
June	\$0.73	\$0.78	\$0.79	\$0.87
July	\$0.69	\$0.76	\$0.83	\$0.87
August	\$0.73	\$0.72	\$0.82	\$0.86
September	\$0.76	\$0.72	\$0.81	\$0.93
October	\$0.75	\$0.74	\$0.94	\$0.94
November	\$0.75	\$0.78	\$0.97	\$0.96
December	\$0.74	\$0.77	\$0.94	\$0.99
Full Year	\$0.71	\$0.73	\$0.85	\$0.91



Weighted Average Price per Oyster



	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Delaware	\$0.61	\$0.71	\$0.73	\$0.85	\$0.91
Maryland	\$0.50	\$0.50	\$0.47	\$0.47	\$0.40
Virginia	--	--	--	--	\$0.43

MD data from: Parker, M. (2026). Maryland oyster aquaculture industry summary. [Maryland Oyster Aquaculture Industry Summary > Total Harvest](#) and VA data from: Hudson, K. and S.B. White (2024) Virginia Shellfish Aquaculture Situation and Outlook Report.

Commercial Lessee Survey-2024

- Exploring value added service.
- Low poaching on lease.
- Low boating damage reported.
- Variable mortality (5%-80%) reported due to husbandry, SUMS, disease, smothering of oysters, and unknown.



Thank you.

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