

# Oysters



## Growing oysters

NSW oysters are grown sustainably in the tidal brackish waters of coastal lakes and rivers between the Tweed River in the north and Wonboyn Lake in the south.

### Quick facts:

- ⇒ Oysters are not fed or treated with any chemicals throughout their lifetime in the water or after harvest.
- ⇒ A Sydney Rock Oyster will filter an estimated 0.25 ML of estuarine river water, with all NSW farmed oysters removing over 1 million tonnes of suspended material, mostly phytoplankton, in their lifetime.
- ⇒ For best growth an oyster needs relatively clear water with a salinity less than 35ppt, pH between 6.75 to 8.75, temperature between 14 - 30oC, and low concentrations of metal compounds.
- ⇒ Most oyster species change sex during their life.
- ⇒ An adult female oyster releases between 20 to 40 million eggs and a male, hundreds of millions of sperm at spawning.
- ⇒ Larvae settle on a hard surface to mature. Most commercial production relies on settling larvae on sticks or slats before growing out on trays, sticks, baskets and rafts.
- ⇒ In their lifetime oysters will be graded and culled a number of times.
- ⇒ 'Wild' Sydney Rock Oysters take over 3 years to mature whereas selectively bred oysters are maturing in 2 years.



Source: White, I., 2001. *Safeguarding Environmental Conditions for Oyster Cultivation in New South Wales*. Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies, Australian National University. Report to Healthy Rivers Commission.

[http://www.fisheries.nsw.gov.au/aquaculture/oysters/oyster\\_industry\\_of\\_new\\_south\\_wales](http://www.fisheries.nsw.gov.au/aquaculture/oysters/oyster_industry_of_new_south_wales)