

Argyle Municipal Council
5 Rue J.E. Hatfield Court
Tusket, NS, B0W 3M0
admin@munargyle.com

July 28, 2025

Dear Warden Albright and Argyle Municipal Councillors,

We write to congratulate you on the collaborative development of Nova Scotia's first Aquaculture Development Area (ADA) and to recognize your role in helping advance a sustainable shellfish and seaweed farming sector that holds promise for both the economy and the environment.

The Ecology Action Centre has long championed shellfish and seaweed seafarming as promising opportunities that can strengthen our coastal economies and food security while delivering environmental benefits. We work alongside small-scale sea farmers, researchers, policy makers, communities and product developers to build a sector that respects ecological limits, local values, and places community-based farmers and entrepreneurs at its heart.

These small scale seafarms produce local seafood with some of the lowest carbon footprints of any protein. Cultivated seaweed, meanwhile, is being developed into a range of high-value products across food, bioplastics, health, and agriculture sectors – by entrepreneurs right here in Atlantic Canada. Particularly in the face of climate change, a robust shellfish and seaweed farming sector can also help diversify our seafood economy that continues to be precariously reliant on a few species.

There is strong demand—locally, regionally, and internationally—for farmed Nova Scotia oysters, scallops, mussels, and seaweed. However, this potential remains largely untapped. While shellfish aquaculture has matured in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, production in Nova Scotia continues to lag behind, despite having suitable ecosystem to support small, low-impact seafarms:

	PEI	NB	NS
Shellfish production value	\$45 million	\$23 million	\$13 million
Available coastline	3,000-km	2,250-km	13,300-km

*DFO 2022 Aquaculture Production Statistics

Our 2023 market analysis, [Road Map for Nova Scotia Kelp Farming](#), found that kelp farming and product development is poised to generate at least \$50 million in direct farmgate sales and local economic activity - potentially more if primary processing value is also done locally.

Environmental Co-Benefits

Beyond economic opportunity, regenerative aquaculture—when done right—can offer a range of environmental benefits. Shellfish and seaweeds naturally filter and clean surrounding waters, provide habitat and nursery grounds for juvenile marine species, and require no input of feed, pesticides, or antibiotics. Instead, they absorb excess nitrogen and carbon while growing, contributing to ocean health and water quality.

These farms can also buffer coastal infrastructure by dampening wave energy. The species used in farming—kelp, mussels, and oysters—are vital to restoring wild habitats such as kelp forests and oyster reefs, which are key to supporting marine biodiversity, carbon storage, and commercial fish populations. Local hatcheries and the cultivation of native species could therefore support both sustainable sea farming and broader coastal adaptation efforts.

With the development of the ADA, the Argyle area is well-positioned to become a hub for innovation and leadership in this space. There is an opportunity to foster local research and development, create hatchery and extension services, and grow a skilled local workforce in low-impact shellfish and seaweed farming.

How We Support the Sector

Through our Kelp Kurious program, the Ecology Action Centre serves as a support and advocacy hub for small-scale seafarmers, entrepreneurs, researchers, and communities working to realize the potential of kelp farming in Atlantic Canada. Our program operates the only on-water kelp R&D and training farm in Nova Scotia. We produce quality kelp seedlings in our on-site nursery, offer workshops, and grow beautiful food grade kelp on our farm to ensure a consistent supply for restaurants, retail, and product developers while the market is in emerging. We support farmers and entrepreneurs to navigate regulations, provide market research as well as support to local governments and investors interested in supporting this green sector.

Pioneering a new local development strategy—particularly in an emerging sector that operates in public waters—comes with unique challenges. Your efforts represent a valuable learning opportunity for other municipalities and regions as we collectively navigate how to manage ocean spaces in ways that balance innovation, access, and sustainable use. We hope you will continue to support and refine this initiative.

We would be happy to provide more information, offer local presentations, or trainings, if there is interest. Please feel free to get in touch with any questions.

Sincerely,



Shannon Arnold
Associate Director, Marine Programs
sarnold@ecologyaction.ca