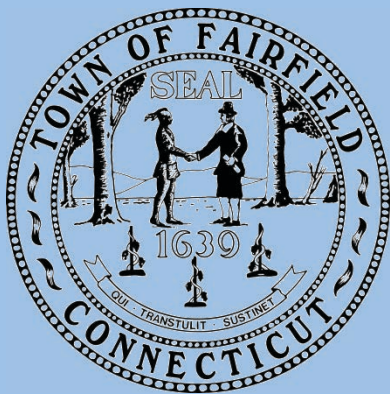




Oyster Shell Recycling Project Report



**Town of Fairfield Shellfish
Commission**

The Importance of Oyster Shell Recycling

- Oyster shells are the main building blocks for rehabilitating and creating new oyster reefs.
- In 2010, over 22 million* oysters were harvested from Connecticut waters. We need to get those shells back into the water to help maintain healthy marine environments.
- Recycling oyster shell helps to reduce waste in landfills.
- There are many successful Oyster Shell Recycling Programs across the US:

Sink Your Shucks - Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Texas

<http://oysterrecycling.org/>

S.C.O.R.E – South Carolina Oyster Restoration and Enhancement

<http://score.dnr.sc.gov/>

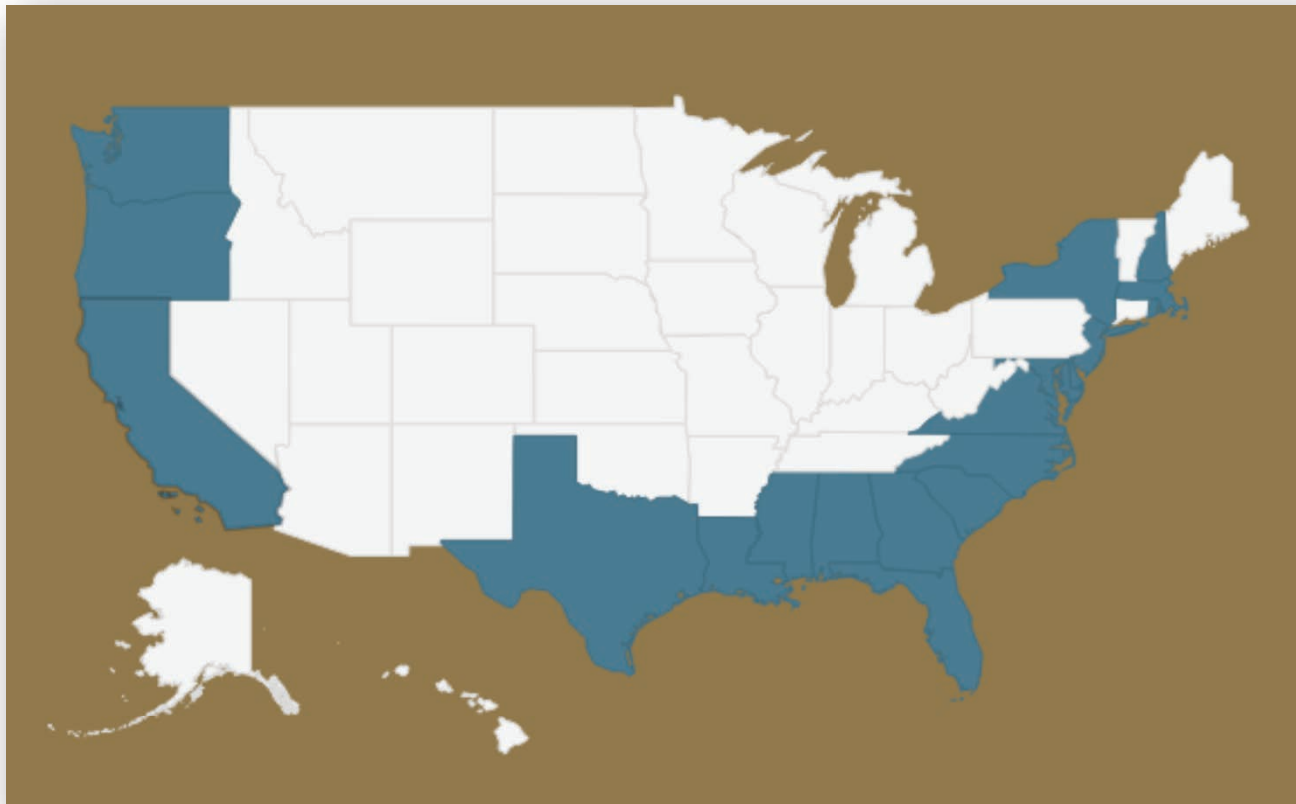
S.R.A - The Shell Recycling Alliance Program - Maryland / DC / Virginia

<http://oysterrecovery.org/sra/>

*CT Dept. of Agriculture.

States With Oyster Shell Recycling Programs

- Connecticut is one of a few coastal states without an organized oyster shell recycling program.



How To Get Started

- Town Shellfish Commissions can and should take the lead in spearheading/organizing oyster shell recycling programs.

Identify and partner up with local restaurants

- Fairfield's Oyster Shell Recycling Program includes 5 restaurants:
Black Rock Oyster Bar, BYRAC, Martel, The Whelk, and Heirloom

Storage/Collection Area

- Identify a suitable collection area, preferably town property.
- Areas should be away from residential areas (odor can be strong).
- Fairfield's collection area is behind the town Conservation Dept. building.
- A hard or paved surface is needed to lay out the shell.
- Collection area should be divided into sections (Fairfield has a 3 bay system)
- Shells needs to cure/dry out for 6 months before going into the water.

Collections

- 5 gallon buckets are needed (*Fairfield Shellfish Commission got Home Depot to donate 50 buckets*).
- Create labels for buckets to identify the recycling program.
- Restaurants can store buckets outside behind restaurant.
- Need volunteer to do pick ups once a week & transport to collection area.
- Shells can also be collected off area beaches, organize public shell collection events.
- Local Shellfish Commissioners could enlist help from:
 - Town Conservation and Public Works departments
 - Local Colleges / Universities
 - High School Science Programs
 - Boy and Girl Scouts
- Log and track amount of shells collected.
(*In four months Fairfield has collected over 4000 pounds of shell*).





What To Do With The Shell

- Create new oyster reefs.
- Rehabilitate dying or over harvested oyster reefs.
- Collect Spat.
- Partner with commercial shellfisherman to use shell for their existing beds.

Fairfield Shellfish Commission Oyster Reef Project.

- Bag shell and collect spat* (June through August) *Spat collection could require special permissions and permits.
- Deposit shells near existing recreational oyster reef to cultivate recruitment and development of new oyster reefs



Future Goals

- Create a state-wide organized oyster shell recycling program.
- Obtain funding from state and/or grants.
- Create partnerships with University Marine Science Programs and other State Organizations to help with organizing oyster shell recycling programs and oyster reef restoration projects.

