

GREAT EASTERN SHELLFISH SNOW HILL OYSTERS



Luke Breza

Great Eastern Shellfish; Snow Hill Oysters

The farm is owned by David Chamberlin and Luke Breza who raise their oysters in Chincoteague Bay south of Snow Hill, MD. They use the float method to grow shellfish that have received wide acclaim for their look and taste. They use the name “Snow Hill Oysters” because there are so many others that utilize Chincoteague in their name. Problems encountered in developing the business have included wind storms that have scattered their growout gear, causing them to spend time retrieving and repairing it and an epizootic of the oyster disease Dermo two years ago that severely affected their production.

David received a SARE grant from USDA in 2010 to test a new design for floats in order to minimize labor for cleaning gear. His design for the “Big Flip Float” has two vinyl coated wire baskets on either side of the float that hold the oyster bags. The high side is out of water, allowing biofouling to desiccate and be easily removed while the bottom side holds the oyster bags underwater while the animals grow. A long handled tool was designed for one person to easily and quickly flip the ten-foot long floats over for rotating the sides.

Snow Hill Oysters have been well received by chefs and others who have used them and they are mentioned on many websites that discuss various oysters available to the public.

Luke Breza represented the float producers at the Maryland Shellfish Aquaculture Conference to discuss the pros and cons of his business and their growing method.