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## Senators Collins, King Announce Nearly \$650,000 to Support Maine Shellfish Industry

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King announced that Maine Shellfish Developers, LLC, of Walpole received a total of \$649,690 to increase the production of low-cost, sustainable oysters and bolster Maine’s seafood economy. This funding was awarded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture’s (NIFA) Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program.

“Small businesses are the backbone of Maine’s economy, and helping them to reach their growth potential strengthens our communities and creates new employment opportunities, particularly in rural areas of our state,” **said Senators Collins and King in a joint statement.** “We welcome USDA’s investment in Maine Shellfish Developers, which will foster cutting-edge research and help strengthen Maine’s oyster industry.”

The SBIR Program encourages the growth of domestic small businesses by offering competitively awarded grants to support high-quality research related to important scientific problems and opportunities in agriculture. These small business ventures are recognized as having the potential for larger scale commercialization as well as benefits to the community at large.

Senators Collins and King are steadfast supporters of Maine’s marine economy. Earlier this year, they worked to secure funding through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the [Seafood Economic Accelerator \(SEAMaine\)](#), an economic strategic roadmap to diversify markets and strengthen Maine’s seafood industry.

SMALL BUSINESS

# USDA investing in Maine's growing oyster industry

\$600,000 has been awarded to Maine Shellfish Developers of Walpole.



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A Maine shellfish grower has been awarded more than \$600,000 from the federal government to increase its production of oysters.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture's Small Business Innovation Research Program is providing the money to [Maine Shellfish Developers of Walpole](#).

The business's website states that its model can "produce market size oysters year-round and insulated from major weather and environmental risks."

The shellfish grower is located at the Darling Marine Center in Walpole, Maine. The facility is owned by the University of Maine and is dedicated to incubating Aquaculture technology and business development.

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Maine Sens. Susan Collins, a Republican, and Angus King, an independent, said the aid will "foster cutting-edge research and help strengthen Maine's oyster industry."

