

Industries of the Future

EXPANDING FLORIDA'S AQUACULTURE: INSIGHTS & INNOVATIONS

April 10, 2024
2:00PM to 4:00PM EST



Dr. Sherry Larkin

Professor and Director
Florida Sea Grant

Sherry Larkin is a professor in the Food and Resource Economics Department at the University of Florida. She earned her Ph.D. in agricultural and resource economics from Oregon State University in 1998 and has been a faculty member at UF since 2000. Her research focused on fisheries management, aquaculture, and the estimation of the environmental values. In 2014, Sherry became an Associate Dean for Research and Associate Director of the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station. Since 2020, she has served as the director of the Florida Sea Grant College Program, one of 34 university-based research, extension and education programs located throughout the U.S. coastal states and territories.



Portia Sapp

Director, Division of Aquaculture
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer
Services

Portia Sapp is the Director of the Division of Aquaculture and chairs the FDACS Science Advisory Workgroup (SAW) and is the head of the Agriculture in Education subgroup within SAW. Portia started with FDACS as an Environmental Supervisor in the Bartow Field Office in 2005. Prior to working for state government, she

worked in an ecotoxicology lab conducting mass spectrometry for volatile organic compounds and managed livestock for Johns Hopkins University. She earned her Master of Science from Towson University in Maryland specializing in fish physiology and ecology. She serves on the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission as the Chair of the Molluscan Shellfish Subcommittee, as the Region 4 Regulatory representative on the Executive Board of the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference, and on the Apalachicola Bay System Initiative Community Advisory Board and the Pensacola Bay System Stakeholder Working Group.



Damien Claire

Chief Sales and Marketing Officer Atlantic Sapphire

Damien Claire is the Chief Sales and Marketing Officer for Atlantic Sapphire, a producer of ocean-safe, sustainable seafood at a “Bluehouse” in Homestead, Florida - *Blue is the new green!* The local-to-you brand delivers sustainable, ocean-safe salmon across North America. Prior to joining Atlantic Sapphire, Damien was the President of Platina Seafood, Inc. His experience includes positions in several industries around the world. From 2009 to 2014, he served as Sales/Analyst for South Pacific Specialties in Miami. From 2004 to 2008, he also acted as Vice President of Business Development for Global Outsourcing in Chile. Damien earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Computer Science and Business Administration from Lander University in South Carolina.



Ed Chiles

Owner Chiles Hospitality

Ed Chiles owns and operates three restaurants under the Chiles Hospitality umbrella on Anna Maria Island and Longboat Key, Florida. The historic flagship, The Sandbar, opened in 1979, followed by the Mar Vista in 1990 and The Beach House in 1993. He has become a staple in the sustainable tourism industry, with each restaurant menu featuring locally sourced Florida fare from a network of specialty producers that share in his vision. In 2021, Ed acquired Gamble Farm Organics, located in nearby Parrish, FL. A leader in ecological farming, Gamble Farm Organics prioritizes soil health, ecological diversity, and land stewardship. The farms thoughtful regenerative practices help each crop express its full nutrient and flavor potential. This beautiful organic produce can be found at any of our three waterfront restaurants and farm market.

A recognized leader in promoting sustainability, Ed has been a driving force for best practices in his local community, Gulf region and the state of Florida. He works closely with the United Nations World

Tourism Organization (UNWTO) on sustainability initiatives, as his hospitality group has been designated as part of the first Global Observatory for Sustainable Tourism. Ed lends his expertise and resources through his involvement in several community and regional organizations. He serves on the Gulf Seafood Foundation board to promote tourism and the historic culture of the coast. He is a founding member of Solutions to Avoid Red Tide (START), founder of Gulf Shellfish Institute, Solutions from The Land, and Shellfish Growers Climate Coalition. Ed is also the initiator of the All Clams on Deck initiative, which promotes the use of biological mitigation strategies for seagrass and bivalve restoration which enhances and energizes local estuaries.



Dr. LaDon Swann

Director

Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant

LaDon Swann is the director of the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium and serves as the national Sea Grant aquaculture liaison. He is responsible for implementing practical solutions to coastal issues through competitive research, graduate student training, extension, outreach and K-12 education in Alabama and Mississippi. In his national role as a Sea Grant aquaculture liaison, he works to strengthen the Sea Grant aquaculture portfolio. He has conducted research on shellfish aquaculture and habitat restoration, and he has many years of experience designing, delivering and evaluating adult education programs. The Tennessee native worked 10 years with the Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant College Program at Purdue University, where he earned a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction for adults. His bachelor's and master's degrees were obtained from Tennessee Technological University in wildlife and fisheries management and fisheries biology. He also served as a U.S. Peace Corps aquaculture volunteer in Togo, West Africa.