

Aquaculture possible, profitable in Texas

By KITTIE FRALEY

Aquaculture is underwater agriculture, and it is becoming increasingly important in Texas.

"Aquaculture would provide a productive and environmentally sound use for underdeveloped coastal and inland areas," said Dr. Jim Davis, fisheries specialist in the wildlife and fisheries sciences department at Texas A&M University.

Texas contains 2.9 million acres of fresh water, 1.5 million acres of bays and estuaries and 1.1 million acres of marshlands and tidal pools.

"With the entire state providing the optimum temperature for warm water species (77 F or 25 C) and portions of the state receiving more than 40 inches of rain a year, parts of Texas are

perfect for aquaculture," Davis said.

"So far, the best areas we have found in Texas for aquaculture have been the upper Gulf Coast and parts of east Texas, especially around Orange," Davis explained.

The most important thing in aquaculture is the water condition, he said.

"Where the water comes from is extremely important in aquaculture," Davis said, "the farmer must know how to treat the water so that it can be used to grow fish."

Davis said catfish and crawfish could be utilized commercially in Texas.

"Both fish are often overlooked but are viable industries," he said, "but we need to develop the kind of thinking

that is necessary to use these in our diet."

Of course, a person who wants to become involved in aquaculture must get a permit.

"Environmental impacts of aquaculture are regulated by a number of federal, state and local government agencies," Davis said, "and regulation deals with water quality, use of chemicals, water quantity, land use, fish and wildlife and public health."

Davis and other fish farmers felt that aquaculture had no coordination between the different agencies and started working on an aquaculture plan in January 1980.

The plan was sent to the governor's office in January 1981, and in turn sent to the Texas Energy and Natural Resources Council for approval.



Photo by Kitty Fraley

This ten-acre lake is used in the aquaculture research program sponsored by Texas A&M University. It is located off FM 60 on the way to Lake Somerville.

Grad's dream comes true

By KELLI PROCTOR

A 1980 agricultural journalism graduate of Texas A&M University has made a name for herself, and has had a career dream come true as the new managing editor of the Brangus Journal.

When she graduated from the University in May 1980, Martha Hollida began working as assistant editor of the journal, which is the official publication of the International Brangus Breeders Association. In November 1981, she was promoted to acting managing editor, which she described as a chance to prove herself for the editor's position. Then on February 21, she became the new managing editor.

Hollida said she had been

offered other jobs before graduation, but the job at the Brangus association was the one she had wanted for a long time.

Reared in Missouri around a commercial cattle operation, Hollida was determined to have a cattle-related job.

After hearing about the job, Hollida said, she immediately sent in a resume and files and then called to apply.

She had already met Karen Cowanbremer, the previous editor, while working in the press room at the Houston Livestock Show.

Hollida said working at the show gave her opportunities to meet editors and other important people.

As editor, Hollida covers sales and shows, writes feature stories, takes pictures and travels extensively, all of which she did

when she was assistant editor. But now she is also responsible for financial business, planning, and managing the staff.

The journal's staff is small, with only five full-time people, but they manage to maintain quality, Hollida said.

The journal is published monthly with a circulation of about 3,200, she said.

As for the future, Hollida wants to concentrate on maintaining the magazine's quality. Last year, the journal won the livestock publishing council's award for the outstanding magazine under 100 pages.

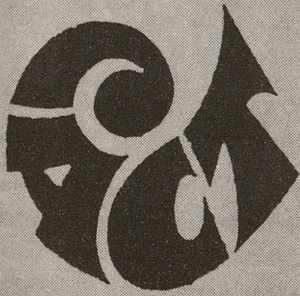
In college, Hollida was active in many clubs, including the National Agri-Marketing Association, the Saddle and Sirloin Club and Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow.

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