



Benefits of an Aquaculture Certificate of Registration for Educators

If your school has an aquaculture system and is looking to start an aquaculture program, obtaining an [Aquaculture Certificate of Registration](#) issued by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) may be the best next step. An Aquaculture Certificate of Registration allows your school to sell and harvest aquaculture products for profit.

An Aquaculture Certificate of Registration identifies your products as agriculture commodities and entitles you to the same benefits bestowed on other agricultural producers. This includes tax benefits and the reduction or elimination of permits required by other agencies. Aquaculture systems are hands-on living labs in which students can engage with a variety of aquatic organisms. Students and educators can learn about biology, math, chemistry, engineering, marketing and business management.

Aside from these benefits, obtaining the Aquaculture Certificate of Registration allows you to connect with FDACS and the aquaculture industry as a whole. During annual inspections, or upon request, FDACS employees can offer valuable guidance and information on ways to improve your system and provide presentations for both educators and students.

An Aquaculture Certificate of Registration may be beneficial for your school because it allows aquatic organisms to be given to students, distributed in school lunches, or be sold. It also allows the production of restricted species, such as tilapia.



Certifying your school as an aquaculture facility will allow interested students to gain the necessary experience to achieve a [Florida Aquaculture Association certification](#). This certification prepares laborers to work in aquaculture related fields upon high school graduation.

Schools with a valid Aquaculture Certificate of Registration are eligible for future FDACS funding opportunities.



Frequently Asked Questions:

What rules do I need to follow to maintain an Aquaculture Certificate of Registration?

All certificate holders must abide by the [Aquaculture Best Management Practices \(BMPs\)](#). An annual inspection ensures that aquaculture farms comply with requirements related to environmental protection, containment, hazardous waste disposal and worker safety. [Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points \(HACCP\)](#) training and certification are required if you intend to process or prepare the products on-site, such as school cafeteria or culinary program.

What is the fee for an Aquaculture Certificate of Registration?

The annual registration fee is waived for each elementary, middle, high or vocational school that participates in the aquaculture certification program pursuant to [section 597.004\(1\)\(h\), Florida Statutes](#).

How often do I need to renew my Aquaculture Certificate of Registration?

Initial applications and renewals can be completed via the [Aquaculture Portal](#). Aquaculture Certificates of Registration expire on June 30th of each year, regardless of date of initial application, and must be renewed annually.

Is an Aquaculture Certificate of Registration required if no products are sold?

No, FDACS does not regulate hobbyists that grow aquatic species for personal use or consumption. However, as outlined above, there are several benefits to registering your school and an Aquaculture Certificate of Registration would be required if you plan to sell the aquaculture products grown.



For more information, visit the [Aquaculture Educator Resources](#) webpage.

