



shellfish culture

shellfish culture newsletter | Summer 2015

New GM's agenda: engaging every customer



New GM Greg Bowers with some of the Shellfish Culture team at Pipe Clay Lagoon

New Shellfish Culture General Manager Greg Bowers commenced his job late last year, with a particular focus on enhancing customer interactions and supply chain efficiencies.

"Shellfish Culture has built a strong reputation for its research and technical expertise over a number of years", says Greg. "That level of expertise and technical know-how will continue to be a priority, and because these are great strengths for the company, we're now able to consistently build our stock inventory for our customers. At the start of this year, our stock levels were very good.

"So my focus is to redouble our sales effort and ensure we have a fast, effective and efficient supply chain from our farm gate to our customers, whatever size of stock they're looking for."

Greg came to Shellfish Culture from Coca Cola Amatil where he was General Manager Supply Chain for Victoria and Tasmania. He has an expert knowledge in this field and he approaches it from a "customer-centric" point of view.

"As General Manager I'm instilling in our team a new commercial focus that complements this company's strong technical achievements," says Greg.

"We've already embarked on a program of sales and demand planning. We want to better understand the demand that exists now and into the future, and make sure we supply that demand. We also want to track our performance very closely: did we get the order to the customer on time at the right size, quality and price?"

Regular workshops involving senior staff have already commenced to fine tune this strategy.

Also joining the team at the same time as Greg was John Stubbs, a former Hawkesbury River oyster farmer who is a well-known and highly respected industry figure. "John has taken on the role of Customer Product Manager, and he is already bringing his unrivalled knowledge into the role of supporting Shellfish Culture and our customers," says Greg.

"Over the next few months, John and I will be spending a lot of time together in the ute as we travel round our customer base on the mainland and in Tasmania.

Greg lists some of his other priorities in his SCL role as biosecurity and managing the expansion of Shellfish Culture's farm water in Pipe Clay Lagoon. "We're extending our presence in Pipe Clay Lagoon with considerably more racking to grow and sell a larger oyster, which decreases mortality in stock levels and allows farmers to generate a quicker return."



John Stubbs is already bringing his own oyster farming experience to his new role. He recently assisted a start-up oyster farmer who bought a lease on Bruny Island in Tasmania. John advised the farmer through-out

the process, on issues as diverse as banking finance to the supply of stock and on-farm practical advice.

General Manager Greg Bowers says it is the sort of relationship that Shellfish Culture intends bringing to its customer base. "If you have issues, yell out. We don't mind coming out to provide some advice or assistance."

Also in this issue:

Profiling Smithton Shellfish

Tasmanian oyster awards

**Our people: Hatchery Team Leader
Andy Day**

Chairman's report

A new year, a new General Manager, and a new customer focus: that's Shellfish Culture at the start of a very busy 2015.

This year we are further expanding our farm operation at Pipe Clay Lagoon with the addition of more racking so as to meet customers' needs in a range of product sizes.

Put simply, our aim moving forwards is to take costs out of our customers' businesses.

In recent years Shellfish Culture has worked hard on building its technical and operational skills to the point where production is at historically high levels. We are now in the position where stock levels are strong and we're even providing spot sales for customers.

The appointments of Greg Bowers as General Manager and John Stubbs as Customer Product Manager considerably ramps up our focus on customer outcomes. Greg Bowers is a specialist in supply chain efficiencies - in getting product

from the farm gate to the customer. John Stubbs is, of course, a well-known industry figure, and a former oyster farmer on the Hawkesbury River.

Together, and with the rest of the team, they are building our inventory of stock to a size and range to meet the demand indicated by our customers both now and into the future. Importantly, they appreciate that high stock levels are just part of the solution customers require. The other crucial factor is the ability to supply swiftly and on time.

I know both John and Greg are getting out and about to meet our customers; so if you feel there is anything you would like to discuss with them, don't hesitate to make contact.

I've received some great feedback to our Annual General Meeting which was held in Bicheno on Tasmania's East Coast last November. My thanks to the staff at our Bicheno hatchery who showed shareholders around the complex following the AGM, and a special thanks to Michel Bermudes for his expert commentary during the tour.



Chairman, Greg Goodman

Customer profile:



Paul Viney

SMITHTON SHELLFISH

Paul Viney put his university degree in aquaculture to good use. In 1996, he bought an old oyster farm in north western Tasmania which he has transformed into a leading supplier for the Australian oyster market.

Paul has two water leases in Duck Bay, Smithton, and one near St Helens on the Tasmanian east coast. His initial Duck Bay acquisition of 15ha is now nearly 30ha spread over the three sites.

His oysters grow at Duck Bay and finish off at the Moulting Bay lease near St Helens. "Over

the years, Duck Bay has become susceptible to periods of poor water quality and long periods of closures. However, Smithton is generally a very good area for growing hard oysters, and then we finish them off in the deeper water at St. Helens where there is a lot more food available for them."

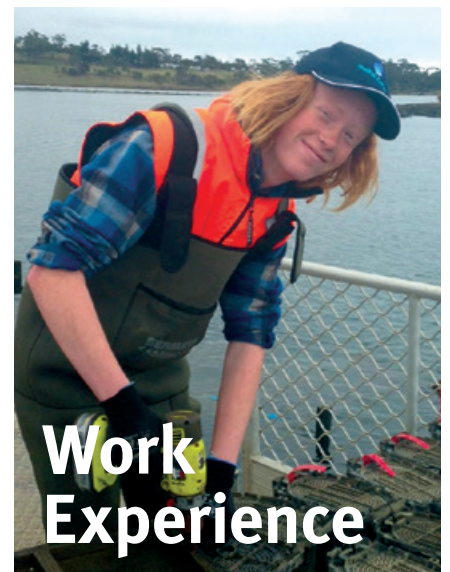
Product is transferred from Smithton to St Helens twice a week, and is harvested four to five times a week at St. Helens, says Paul. "I employ five staff in Smithton and three at St. Helens. I've got great managers in each location who handle the day to day operational aspects of the farms while I undertake the task of General Manager.

Smithton Shellfish produces between 200 and 250 thousand dozen oysters each year. "Much of what we produce goes to the Sydney Fish Market, but we also sell into Victoria, Western Australia and Queensland."

Oyster farming is a fickle business, says Paul. "There's always potential threats to the farms themselves in terms of water quality changes, and we're also dependent on a seamless operation at the hatcheries that supply us. If there is a hiccup at the hatchery end, the flow on through to the farm can make life quite difficult.

"We use Shellfish Culture spawnless oysters to provide a boost at the busy Christmas and summer consumer period. The spawnless oysters are invaluable in helping us to meet the peak demand season."

Paul is a local North West Coaster. He was born in Burnie - just along the coast from Smithton - and has three children.



Rex Gillian

Shellfish Culture is always ready to consider helping young people who show an interest in our industry.

For instance, it provides considerable support to the Cowell Area School in SA which has its own oyster farm run by a manager and staffed by the students.

Recently, Rex Gillian, a grade 10 student at Clarence High School in Hobart, joined the Pipe Clay Lagoon Nursery Team for work experience. Rex enjoyed his time working with the team at both Pipe Clay Lagoon and Little Swanport. He thoroughly enjoyed his time working on the water, and during his period with us, he was given a great insight into the oyster farming industry.



Tasmanian Oyster Awards

The Tasmanian Shellfish Industry Awards late last year resulted in a win for Tasmania's Oyster Bay Oysters, with a little assistance from Shellfish Culture.

Oyster Bay Oysters won the gold medal with spat supplied by Shellfish Culture. It was a great win for the coveted title of Top Tassie Oyster, and the product is now being featured on the menus of some of Australia's leading restaurants such as the Morrison Bar and Oyster Room in Sydney.

The Awards were presented as part of the Shellfish Futures 2014 conference last October.

The annual industry conference and awards were held on Tasmania's North West Coast. The theme of the event was *Surviving in Risky Times*, and the keynote speaker was Prof. Richard Whittington of Sydney University who talked about advances in the fight against POMs.

Industry notables Anna Rubio, Andrew Bradbury, and Julian Harrington judged the inaugural Tasmanian Shellfish Industry Awards, and the Adjudicator was Steve Bowley.

Our thanks to Ian Duthie for these pictures

Above: Minister for Primary Industries and Water – Jeremy Rockliff, Jane Dyke, Hayden Dyke and Jon Poke Below: The winning entry.





A degree in chemistry in the UK, then a post graduate diploma in aquaculture in Tasmania. To the obvious question Andy Day shrugs: “I just decided I didn’t want to be a chemist.”

Kiwi born Andy is Senior Hatchery Technician at Shellfish Culture’s Pipe Clay Lagoon headquarters south east of Hobart. Andy plans and manages the commercial larvae runs, looking after the larvae for their first 16 crucial days.

“We spawn mature oysters onsite to produce free swimming, planktonic larvae, which we feed with cultured microalgae. After 14-16 days they metamorphose into spat – a miniature oyster – at which point they get transferred into our bottle system.”

“At that stage, they’re at 280 microns’ size, and the very extensive bottle system we have on site takes them to the next level of their development,” says Andy.

“Our role involves an intensive work schedule while we’re looking after the larvae, feeding them, and monitoring them,” says Andy. “Our team works lots of weekends but it’s always satisfying to produce a good batch of healthy spat that forms the foundation of what our business is all about”.

When he gets time off, Andy, who lives at nearby Sorell, likes to spend quality time diving, fishing and kayaking.

Staff training

Shellfish Culture’s staff training program continues to develop skills amongst the nearly 30 staff at the company.

General Manager Greg Bowers says training programs are important to upskill and multi-skill staff, improve worksite safety and work site efficiency, and ultimately benefit customers because well trained staff equal better and more consistent production schedules.

Recently, Allan Hughes, Nursery Technician, has commenced a Certificate IV in Aquaculture, Andy Day and Elise Wilson have undertaken a Certificate IV in Frontline Management, and Jacqui Singleton has started a Diploma in Management.

Late last year, ten staff undertook confined space training, nine staff undertook First Aid training, and eight staff underwent Fire Extinguisher training while one staff member undertook forklift truck training and one underwent a Marine Radio operator course.



Confined space training. Participants included Rosie Bennett, Greg Hollingsworth, Kate Bowie, Lochlan DeBeyer, James Ransom, Ed Davidson, Tamika Salvesen, Matt Ashlin, Allan Hughes and Alex Priest