

Island Ad-Vantages

THE VIEW FROM ATLANTIC AVENUE

October 1, 2020 – As the scallop fishing fleet starts to think about the upcoming harvest season that begins in early December, the scallops themselves have been active in their own way. Beginning sometime in August, scallops spawn and the juvenile animals (spat) float in the water column where they slowly metamorphose and begin filter feeding on microscopic phytoplankton and detrital material. They continue to grow and eventually begin to settle on the ocean floor where they will be harvested in four to five years to grace your dinner plate. That is, unless those little babies are caught and cultivated. Here in Stonington, Captain Marsden Brewer and his son Bob are just one of several operations in Maine that practice scallop aquaculture. Over the past couple of weeks, they have been hanging mesh bags full of monofilament line from buoys near their lease site to collect scallop spat. Scallops will adhere to the bags where they will continue to grow throughout the winter. Around April, the scallops are harvested from these bags and transferred to hanging cages where they will continue to feed on the phytoplankton in the water and grow. Marsden’s company, Penbay Farmed Scallops, sells scallops at two-years and older. He also returns a lot of these animals to the wild after protecting them from predators, where they become part of the beds that are harvested by scallop fishermen.

The unique thing about cultured scallops in Maine is that you can buy the whole animal, not just the popular and more common adductor muscle that we all love to sear in a frying pan. Eating the whole scallop is much like eating steamer clams, but there are various ways to cook them. Marsden was one of a group of Mainers that traveled to Japan several years ago to learn how to grow scallops and he began to learn some of the ways to cook them. He’s now partnered with Marnie Crowell, a local writer, naturalist and seafood enthusiast, to publish a book of recipes for whole scallops, or “roe-on” scallops. *“Recipe Ideas for Farmed Sea Scallops - The Whole Story”* will be available later this fall. To learn more about Penbay Farmed Scallops and how to purchase some online, visit www.penbayfarmedscallops.com.

Do you have a question about our fisheries? Send it to info@coastalfisheries.org or call 207.367.2708. Learn more about MCCF by visiting us online at www.coastalfisheries.org.

FISHERIES LOG

Prices to Harvesters in Stonington

Lobsters (shedders): \$3.85/lb.

Bait (fresh pogies): \$80/crt.

Fuel (diesel): \$2.09/gal.