

2023 Shrimp Summit a Success; Begins to Re-Shape Shrimp Farming

The Center for Responsible Seafood reports on Summit outcomes and new initiatives; opens up free industry access to Summit session recordings and presentations.

HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM, August 3, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Last week's inaugural TCRS Shrimp Summit delivered many important takeaways, and the polled audience voted overwhelmingly (97%) for another Shrimp Summit next year to follow up on the many initiatives that were started. In-person attendance numbered 300 participants, representing the full value chain, and an additional 360 participated virtually.

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George Chamberlain, TCRS President and Summit Chair

“From conception, we saw the Summit as an opportunity to re-shape the shrimp farming sector with improved efficiency and sustainability and to begin collective plans to expand market demand,” said George Chamberlain, TCRS President and Summit Chair. “We achieved some exciting

outcomes across multiple fronts, but now we must convert those initiatives into results and improvements to be presented at the next summit.”

With global production no longer suffering from catastrophic disease losses, supply has been outpacing demand, and market expansion is needed. To stimulate development of a long-term global shrimp marketing campaign, a bold initiative was discussed by Sandro Coglitore of Omarsa (Ecuador), Le Van Quang of Minh Phu (Vietnam), Tony Downs of Sysco (USA), Thanachote Boonmechote of Thai Union/Chicken of the Sea, and Chowdary Kunam of AZ Gems (USA) to quickly create a significant startup fund. Improvements in product quality and data collection were also identified as priorities in the Global Production and Markets session.

Ahead of the Sustainable Feeds session, TCRS requested and received the general composition of shrimp feeds from eight major feed producers. As a result, the greenhouse gas emissions (GHGe) of a typical shrimp feed have been quantified for the first time, providing a benchmark for improvements via the GSA Vanguard standard for Ingredient Sourcing and Climate Change. Feed production is responsible for approximately 50% of shrimp farming's carbon footprint. With the other half coming largely from the energy used to pump and aerate water, efficient feed use is paramount. Autofeeders and other advances were discussed, and comprehensive progress in

sustainability will require quantifying impacts at every stage of the value chain.

In the Growout Intensification and Disease Management sessions, critical discussions emphasized the need to respect carrying capacity, not only at the farm level, but also at a zone management level. Ecuador's tremendous advances with autofeeders, aeration, and recirculation were highlighted as pathways for safely increasing production and maximizing existing resources.

Genetic selection remains an extremely effective disease management tool, and viral accommodation is a more recent but promising tool to leverage natural immune processes. Advances in diagnostics are coming (Next Generation Sequencing and CRISPR), and it was agreed that World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) policies need to be updated to remove IHNV and TSV from the list of notifiable pathogens and add EHP to the list. Multiple selective breeding approaches were described, common denominators were recognized, and the power of genomic selection was viewed as the way of the future.

The Innovations session introduced attendees to new advances in digital technology, systems to improve feeding efficiency, and more. Indoor RAS systems will continue to spur innovation, and upcycling shrimp processing waste through the circular economy is not only a great idea; it is happening in Vietnam and is poised to grow elsewhere as well.

Small-scale farmers and their unique set of challenges were the focus of the Improver Programs session, and a new program was announced at the Summit. Choice Canning Company (India), the Global Seafood Alliance, and TCRS will collaborate on a joint project to assist small-scale shrimp farmers in India. Speakers in the session also represented a larger collaborative effort to empower small-scale farmers by grouping them into clusters, which allow for training in best practices, collective purchasing of inputs, improved product quality, achievement of certifications, ratings, or labels, international market access, fair payments, and improved livelihoods.

Small-scale shrimp farmers grow 80% of the shrimp produced, and Mr. Jose Thomas, CEO of Choice Canning Company, reminded the audience that these farmers are the backbone of the shrimp industry. Ms. Kim Thanh Nguyen, Vice Director of Kim Delta Vietnam, said that the farmers need assistance with business plans, and they need to be visible to the consumers. "There is huge scope for collaboration on this effort, regionally and internationally, with the support of TCRS," stated Mr. Mahmud Huq, Chairman of the Bangladesh Shrimp and Fish Foundation.

With investment funds being needed to accelerate critical advancements and transform the shrimp farming sector, the Investment session covered vital information. Speakers pointed out that the plan to cluster small-scale farmers can help with investment programs, which have traditionally been challenging at the small-scale level. Improved data collection is needed to de-risk the sector as a whole, but many untapped investment tools are available depending on the

stage and size of an enterprise.

In addition to the significant progress made at the Summit, the event was punctuated with two Lifetime Achievement Award presentations (to the son of Dr. Fujinaga, the Father of Shrimp Farming, and to Robins McIntosh), as well as educational site visits to a high-tech hatchery, farm, processing plant, and seafood waste upcycling facility, and to the enchanting depths of Ca Mau mangrove forests to see organic black tiger shrimp production.

In the coming months, TCRS, Summit attendees, and the seafood industry will continue pushing for progress and sharing updates through follow-up discussions and planning meetings. The seafood industry is encouraged to join the [TCRS Community](#) and the TCRS WhatsApp group to be a part of these critical discussions affecting global shrimp farming's sustainability. Members of the TCRS Community can access the Shrimp Summit discussion hub [here](#).

Recordings and presentations from the Shrimp Summit are available for free in the Shrimp Summit Attendee Hub through December 2023, at responsibleseafood.org/shrimpsummit. For more information, contact info@responsibleseafood.org.

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