

# About aquaculture in NT

Aquaculture is the farming of fish, plants and other organisms that live in fresh or sea water.

Read more about the [species used for aquaculture](#) in the Northern Territory.

## Licences

You must have a licence to run any kind of aquaculture business.

No matter how big your operation is, you must get a licence if you do any of the following:

- farm, breed, culture, or keep live fish or aquatic life for sale or aquaculture purposes - whether they are sold or used, live or dead - or to exhibit any of them for profit
- sell live aquatic life, live fish, or any live eggs, fry, spat, or larva of fish.

## Types of licence

There are two types of aquaculture licence, based on the size of the operation:

- an ornamental aquaculture licence is suitable for small-scale aquarium hobbyists who want to breed and sell their fish, aquatic plants and invertebrates. The facility must hold less than 10,000 litres of water. Read more about [how to apply for an ornamental aquaculture licence](#).
- a commercial aquaculture licence is for larger scale commercial facilities with a total water volume of more than 10,000 litres. Read more about [how to apply for a commercial aquaculture licence](#).

## Research and industry support

Read below to find out about research and development programs and how to get support for your aquaculture business.

### Darwin Aquaculture Centre

The Darwin Aquaculture Centre runs research and development programs for aquaculture businesses in the NT.

The centre is currently researching ways to farm black-lipped oysters, giant clams, and sea cucumbers.

### NT Fisheries

The aquaculture branch of NT Fisheries can provide all of the following services to your business:

- planning, including finding suitable sites and looking after the environment

- advice to investors including how to reach a range of government agencies
- aquatic animal health advice, together with the Berrimah Veterinary Laboratories.

Aquaculture branch staff are in regular contact with licence holders.

## Useful publications

You can get a number of publications from the Darwin Aquaculture Centre, including those listed below:

- [NT barramundi farming handbook](#) (1.7 mb)
- [Recirculating marine aquaculture systems](#) (5.3 mb)
- [Is the use of fishmeal and fish oil in aquaculture diets sustainable](#) (152.6 kb)

## Indigenous aquaculture

The Darwin Aquaculture Centre works with other agencies on aquaculture projects for Indigenous communities.

The centre is running trials for sea cucumbers, giant clams and oysters.

If your Aboriginal community wants to start an aquaculture project, you should contact NT Fisheries on (08) 8999 2144.

## Before you start

You will need a lot of skills and knowledge to work in aquaculture.

You should do thorough research and training before starting a new venture.

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