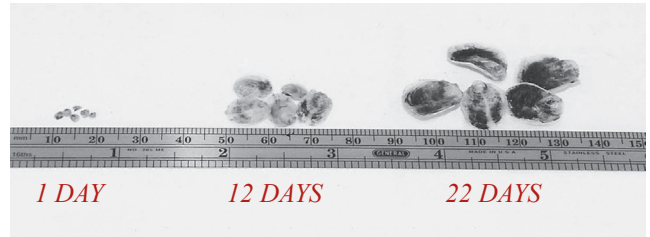


FLOATING UPWELLER

There are several reasons why a floating upweller is a must have for anyone growing large amounts of shellfish. First, the phenomenal growth rates as seen in the picture speak for themselves. The system allows us to purchase smaller seed and to buy it in larger quantities, which saves us money and gives us more control over the life of our oysters. The upweller can handle 1 million animals at a time.



Oyster growth in floating upweller system

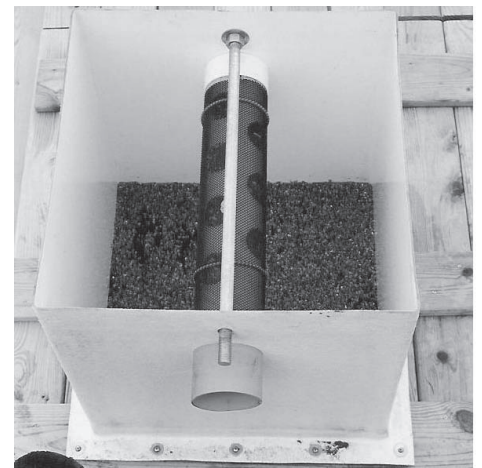
The floating upweller is multi-functional; it can be used as a dock at the same time it is growing shellfish. This is great for marina owners who use floating docks or farmers who



Floating upweller on trailer, ready to launch into water

want a place to keep their boat close to their operation. Also, the low profile and dock-like appearance don't detract from a waterfront view. Because the floating upweller isn't a fixed structure, it can be moved from one location to another as operation needs dictate. When salinity has changed around our own farm, we have moved our system from one site to another. Before Hurricane Isabel, we simply pulled the system from the water.

Underneath the wood decking and between the floats sits the upweller's fiberglass trough and silos. The backbone of the upweller's inner-workings is the eight foot trough which has a 1/2 horsepower pump at one end that moves 800 gallons of water a minute through the system. It is this massive amount of water that causes the shellfish to feed at incredible rates. Once the pump is running, it begins pulling water out of the trough. The decrease in water level in the trough causes water to be pulled through the tubes that connect the silos to the trough. As this water is pulled through the tube, additional water is pulled up through the silo screens (called upwelling) and past the oysters.



Individual Silo

Once the oysters are moved out of the upweller and onto the farm, they continue to feed at high rates. This behavior helps the shellfish to reach larger sizes faster than if grown in other nursery-stage gear or in nature. Ultimately, it means going from seed to sale in under 18 months.