

Press release



1<sup>st</sup> International Seaweed Conference USA

**Seagrass**

7 - 8 SEPTEMBER 2022  
PORTLAND (ME), USA

### **Seagrass USA 2022 successfully held for the first time!**

On 7 & 8 September the first edition of Seagrass USA took place at the Westin Portland Harborview in Portland, Maine. The conference welcomed 279 attendees from 172 companies and 12 countries worldwide: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, The Netherlands, United Kingdom and the USA.

Some 27 speakers presented their topics during a 2-day conference program, which included special features such as an innovation award ceremony, investment panel and a live cooking demo sponsored by Atlantic Sea Farms. On the evening of the first day, FocusMaine sponsored the Welcome Cocktail Reception, which took place at the Portland Museum of Art.

The conference was opened by Bernd Koch (Managing Director of DLG International, Germany) and Wade Merritt (President of Maine International Trade Center & International Trade Director of the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development – DECD)

DLG BENELUX, a subsidiary of DLG International, from The Netherlands, held the international conference Seagrass USA 2022 for the first time in Portland, Maine. The USA edition comes in addition to the European edition of Seagrass and will be held annually. Being the hotspot for the seaweed industry in North America the state of Maine proudly sponsored this first international seaweed conference in the USA. The conference was sponsored by the exclusive event sponsors; Maine Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), Maine Technology Institute (MTI), Maine International Trade Center (MITC) and Maine North Atlantic Development Office (MENADO).

The first edition of Seagrass USA focused thematically on the cultivation of macroalgae and the implementation of new innovative approaches in the USA and beyond. Keynote speakers were Charles Yarish (Professor Emeritus, The University of Connecticut, USA), Silje Forbord (Senior Research Scientist, PhD, SINTEF Ocean, Norway), Scott Lindell (Research Specialist, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, USA) and Jeff Hafting (Ph.D., Senior Scientist, Acadian Seaplants Limited, Canada). In numerous sessions, experts from various research institutes and companies presented their expertise on the following topics:

#### **MARINER program - part I and part II**

The program of Seagrass USA 2022 included 2 dedicated sessions to the ARPA-E's MARINER program - Macroalgae Research Inspiring Novel Energy Resources program that seeks to develop the tools to enable the United States to become a global leader in the production of marine biomass. Speakers in part I were: Dr. Simon Freeman (Program Director, ARPA-E, USA), Daniel Rogers (Technology to Market Advisor, ARPA-E, USA), Eliza Harrison (Program Manager, Ocean Rainforest, Canada) and Alyson Myers (President, Fearless Fund, USA). Speakers in part II included: Nichole Price (Senior Research Scientist, Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences, USA), Kristen A. Davis (Associate Professor, University of California, USA), Tobias Dewhurst (PhD, PE, Ocean Engineer, Kelson Marine, USA) and Clifford Goudey (CEO, TendOcean, USA).

#### **Offshore cultivation and scaling up production**

James Morris (Marine Ecologist, NOAA National Ocean Service, USA), Philip Kerrison (Research Specialist in Red Seaweed Hortimare BV, The Netherlands) and Julie Decker (Executive Director, Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation, USA) addressed Offshore cultivation and scaling up production.

#### **Innovative solutions for seaweed farming & processing**

Huibert-Jan Zweemer (Project Manager, Murre Technologies, The Netherlands) presented innovations from Murre Technologies to further scale-up seaweed farming in the future.



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### **Seaweeds and climate change, ecosystem services, social aspects**

In this session Marc von Keitz (Director, The Grantham Foundation for the Protection of the Environment, USA), Bailey Moritz (Program Officer - Aquaculture, World Wildlife Fund, USA), Jean-Baptiste Thomas (Researcher, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden) and Severine v T Fleming, (Co-Founder, Farmer, Activist-Organizer, Smithereen Farms, Seaweed Commons, USA) spoke about topics related to seaweeds and climate change, ecosystem services and social aspects.

### **Seaweed applications**

Jessica Chalmers (President, Everything Seaweed, USA), Julia Marsh (Co-Founder, CEO, Sway, USA), Loretta Roberson (Associate Scientist, Marine Biological Laboratory, USA) and Briana Warner (CEO, Atlantic Sea Farms, USA) presented several seaweed applications.

### **Innovation Award**

A key element in the program of Seagriculture USA were the Innovation Awards, which were sponsored by the exclusive event sponsors. In total 3 Innovation Awards were presented by the jury: Gold, Silver, and Bronze. The Gold winner of this year was the group lead by Scott Lindell from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (USA) with their application for a new method for selecting, breeding and improving sugar kelp that are infertile. Silver was for David Bailey also from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (USA) with his innovation for an automated underwater seaweed seed-string deployment device. The bronze winner was Kendall Barberly from GreenWave with the GreenWave's Regenerative Ocean Farming Hub, which is a free, online resource designed to provide seed-to-sale support for both emerging and active ocean farmers and hatchery technicians. The Innovation Award Ceremony was moderated by Hannah Pingree, Director, Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future.

### **Investment panel**

Hugh Cowperthwaite (Senior Program Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Coastal Enterprises Inc., USA), moderated the investment panel featuring Bobbie Lamont (Membership Chair and individual investor, Maine Angels, USA), Gediminas Tamosaitis (CEO, Metal Production & Rocket cluster, Lithuania) and Megan Reilly Cayten (Senior Investment Manager, Oceans 2050, USA). The audience engaged in lively discussions with the panel members related to different aspects on investments in seaweed.

### **Live Cooking Demo – Atlantic Sea Farms**

Jonathan Uribe (Food Service and University Dining Sales), Matt Haight (Fermentation Lead) and Jesse Bains (CMO) of Atlantic Sea Farms showed during the live cooking demo the diversity of Kelp as an ingredient to cook with. Several dishes were being prepared and tasted by the audience. Kelp can easily be used in grain bowls, tacos, sauces and soups and smoothies.

Kuno Jacobs, Managing Director of DLG BENELUX stated: *"We are very pleased that the premiere of Seagriculture USA was such a great success, it has created a strong basis to further develop and grow the conference in North America. Furthermore, we see more and more synergy between the different Seagriculture events, which was the aim from the very beginning. The State of Maine has been a great sponsor and the collaboration was excellent"*.

Seagriculture events in 2023:

- Seagriculture Asia-Pacific, 8 – 9 February 2023 (online format)
- Seagriculture EU, 21 – 22 June 2023, Trondheim, Norway
- Seagriculture USA, September 2023 (exact dates and location announced shortly)

For more information on the conference, presentations, the organizers, pictures, contact details of speakers for interviews, refer to [www.seagriculture-usa.com](http://www.seagriculture-usa.com) or contact us [info@dlg-benelux.com](mailto:info@dlg-benelux.com), Tel.: +31 85 401 73 97.

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