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Visit the EC website at [www.wetland.org](http://www.wetland.org)

# OYSTER GROWERS GUIDE

Fall 2009

## MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR

**D**ear Marylander: Thank you for agreeing to be part of our

Marylanders Grow Oysters project, an exciting way to create and develop a living, diverse, oyster reef community.

Through your action and commitment, you are providing an important head start during the first year of life for these vulnerable oysters until they are large enough to be planted on a local sanctuary.

Not only will more oysters be placed in the Chesapeake

Bay as a result of your efforts, but rejuvenated oyster reefs will naturally become vital underwater ecosystems for a rich diversity of aquatic life.

Working together, we can make real our vision for bringing about a cleaner, greener, more sustainable future all of us prefer—both for ourselves, and for future generations.

Good luck and thank you again for working to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, and to set a vital example of stewardship for our fellow Marylanders.

Sincerely,  
Martin O'Malley, Governor



*The future generation of Oyster Growers!*



*Spat will grow on these recycled shells in cages before being placed into sanctuaries.*

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### Oyster Facts

- Oysters grow an average 1 inch per year.
- Oysters can change sex.
- Oyster larvae can only attach to a hard clean surface; after attaching they can never move again.
- Before oysters are a year old, they are called "spat."
- An oyster can filter up to 50 gallons of water per day in warm water.

## About EC and the MGO program

Environmental Concern Inc. (EC) is a nonprofit organization that promotes public understanding and stewardship of wetlands with the goal of improving water quality and enhancing nature's habitat. This is accomplished through wetland outreach and education, native species horticulture, and the restoration, construction and enhancement of wetlands.

The Marylanders Grow Oysters (MGO) program, instituted by Governor Martin O'Malley in 2008 and directed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources reinforces EC's mission to improve water quality and enhance nature's habitat. EC is pleased to be a partner in the 2009 Marylanders Grow Oysters program, distributing spat and facilitating their growth with the property owners residing along San Domingo and La Trappe Creeks.



A special thank you to our 2009 Restoration Summer Intern, Brittany Baker (Allegheny College), for helping us with the first issue of the "Oyster Growers Guide".

## Tell Your Neighbors

**A**sk around! See if your shoreline neighbors are involved with the Marylanders Grow Oysters program (MGO).

If they are, you can compare cages to maximize

the health of your spat; if not, you can talk to them about the ecological (and personal) rewards of growing oysters and possibly persuade them to become an oyster grower too.

The MGO program can also become a community building exercise, as well as a restorative Bay initiative. Offer to shake your neighbors' cages one week or lend them the hose from your pier.

Questions, concerns, or comments? Please contact Jessica Lister at (410) 745-9620 or [oysters@wetland.org](mailto:oysters@wetland.org).

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All About Wetlands Since 1972

# Identify your micro-reef inhabitants



LOOK inside the cage