



Penobscot Bay Scallop Farming

by

Marsden Brewer and Marnie Reed Crowell



When not lobstering, Marsden Brewer and his son Bob are raising whole fresh native sea scallops in Penobscot Bay.

www.PenBayFarmedScallops.com



The Brewers were part of a group who went to Japan to learn from the world leaders in scallop aquaculture. They share what they learned there.



In this model notice the lantern nets suspended underwater on the far left and the green spat bags on the far right. The Brewers are using a similar food system for growing out their scallops.



The Brewers head the Maine Aquaculture Co-op. At a recent Fishermen’s Forum the Co-op members met to share their experiences. This diverse group of people has a wide variety of skill sets. They come together for a common cause- to develop a sustainable scallop “fishery”. Yes, it is a fishery - we do catch the wild larval spat!



Because raising scallops and eating the whole scallop is new, it is important to show how this “farming” in the water column provides not only a tasty product but actually improves the environment with minimum impact on current use. Here is the Brewer’s scallop farm.



The view from the property of coastal real estate owners is unaffected...



...and even the schooners can sail right over.



The line of underwater lantern nets holds the scallops safe from predators. The scallops dine on plankton in the water column and ‘package’ their wastes which drop down and feed the bay’s bottom feeders.





Spawning takes place in late August when the temperature and salinity are just right. Male (above left) and female scallops (on the right with the red roe) shed their sperm and eggs, and since they are so close to one another, the external fertilization success rate can be expected to be high.



The seed - native wild-set young scallop larvae - are collected after about a month when they settle on the fibers in the collecting bags. Then these little spat grow shells and spend time in the spat bags until they are transferred to larger lantern nets.



As the young scallops increase in size, each lantern net gets a smaller number of individuals so the scallops are never crowded during the four years it takes to grow to full size.



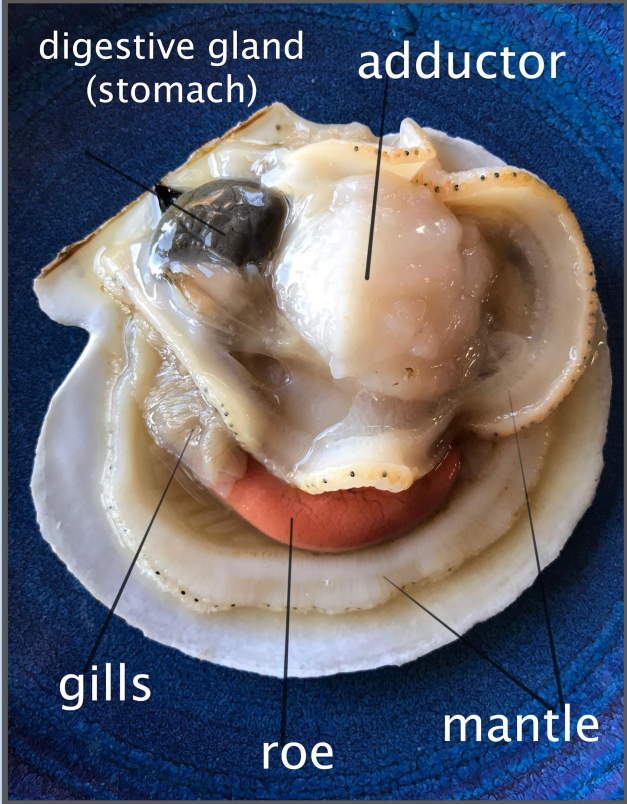
Living is good in the nets and barnacles and mussels take advantage of that. But the shells are prettier without such growths

so the scallops
are graded



and washed.

As a conservation measure, all wild scallops must measure 4" across the shell and only the adductor muscle is eaten. Our scallop species, Atlantic sea scallop, (*Placopecten magellanicus*) ranges from Labrador to the Outer Banks of North Carolina.





Our farmed scallops can be enjoyed at any size. They open readily when steamed. The black digestive gland is snipped off. Only farmed scallops from a certified dealer can safely be eaten whole since they are tested regularly for so-called red tide marine biotoxins.



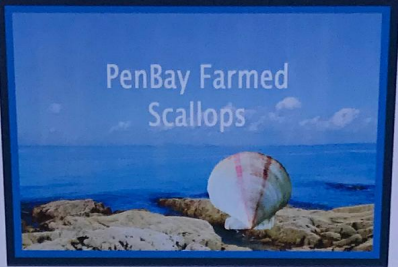
These whole scallops have a subtle taste that many find quickly becomes their favorite seafood. They freeze well and taste great braised in butter on the stove or grilled indoors or out.



They make lovely starters.



Buttered like popcorn, the small petite-sized scallops have earned the nickname “PenBay Popcorn”.



PenBay Farmed
Scallops

Marsden Brewer's Fresh Farmed Scallops

Princess scallops Lebanese style

artichokes, hummus, smoked paprika

browned butter



Today's cooks are rediscovering traditional ethnic recipes like these Lebanese starters or pasta and pesto Italian style dinners.





**For your dinner party an elegant paella
combine the very best of our Penobscot Bay sea foods.**



or a colorful risotto

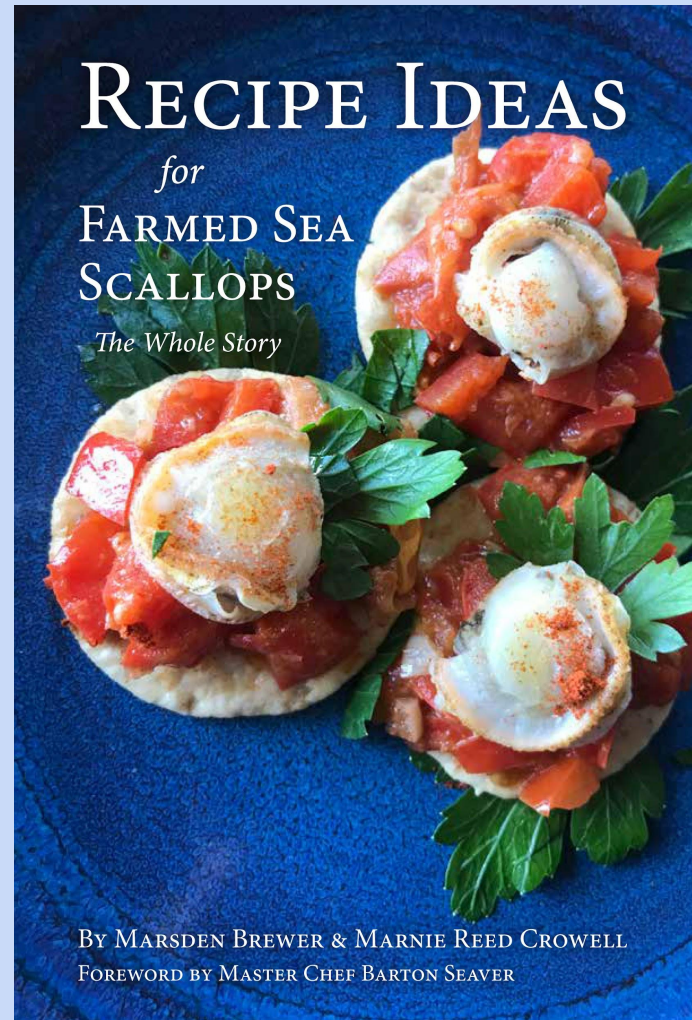
A new cookbook introducing the delicious versatility of whole farmed scallops is now available.

Contact the Brewers at

1-207-367-5100

or

www.penbayfarmedscallops.com/recipes.





Those who currently fish for lobster may wish to add scallop farming to their skills.

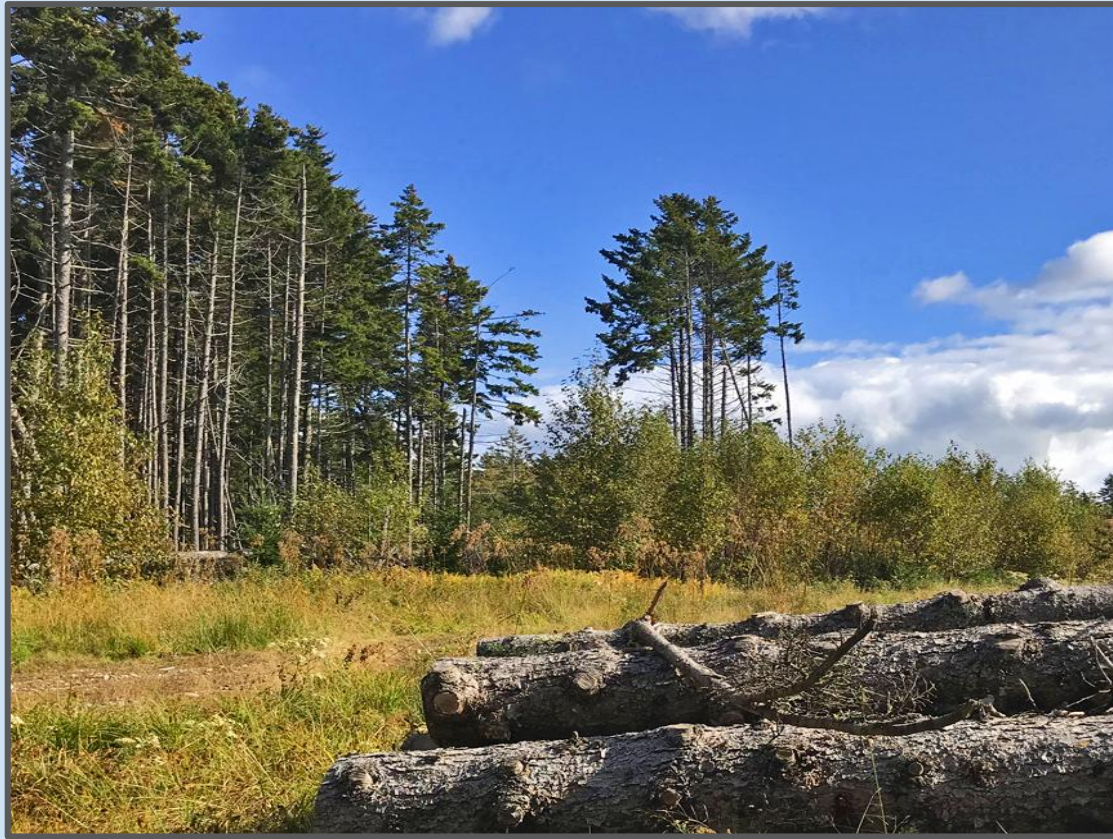
For a sustainable future for our bay we must make wise choices.

Do we harvest the crop or the habitat?



Shane Fowler/CBC

**All our choices have consequences.
These are not simple questions with simple answers.**



**Regrowth results in a new complex of plants and animals.
How would that affect our food system goals?**

What is the appropriate scale?



Scott Olson/Getty Images



**Practically speaking, do we answer based on economics or ecology?
Independent operators or corporate interests? Short or long term?**

Here is Maine Sea Grant's Dana Morse out with the Brewers gathering data on various methods of scallop raising.





Marsden Brewer is quick to tell you that he has undertaken this grand adventure to assure that the bay's future is sustainable for his son Bobby and his grandchildren.



Penobscot Bay scallop aquaculture offers the potential for combining local knowledge, appropriate scale, and modern science for sustainable, native - and utterly delicious - food from the sea.

PenBay Farmed Scallops

www.penbayfarmedscallops.com

