



MAINE  
AQUACULTURE  
ASSOCIATION

Maine Aquaculture Sector

# Survey Report

A snapshot of Maine's 2023 aquaculture sector

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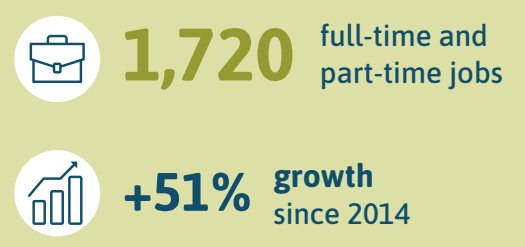
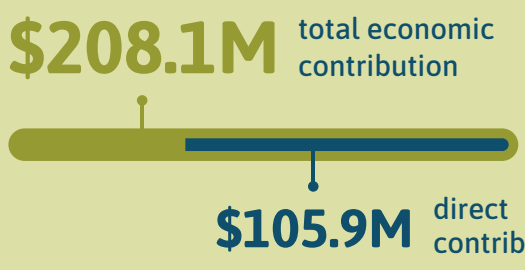


# MAINE AQUACULTURE SECTOR SURVEY REPORT

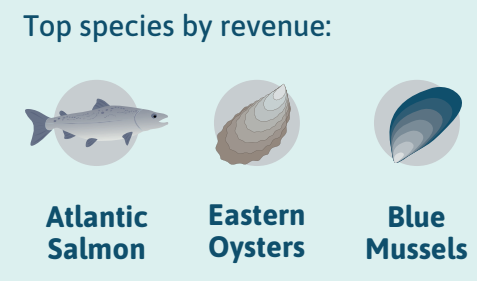
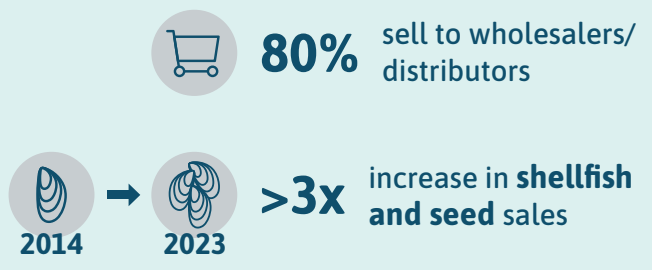
## Executive Summary

- The Maine aquaculture sector is primarily made up of small, beginning farmers.
- 79% of respondents began operations within the last 10 years.
- 83% of respondents held up to 20 leased acres, and the majority of respondents held more than 5 leased acres.
- 95% of respondents reported stable revenue or growth between 2018-2023, with a median sales revenue growth of 37.5%.
- Farmers are feeling optimistic. 77% of respondents predict sales revenue growth by 2030, with a median sales growth projection of 75% per business – likely spurred on by the many pre-and early-revenue beginning farms trying to reach their breakeven point.
- The top three species, by value, in 2023 were Atlantic salmon, eastern oysters, and blue mussels.
- Reported shellfish and seed sales more than tripled in value between 2014 and 2023.
- Across shellfish and seaweed farms, total compensation to employees and owners is the greatest cost, followed by gear/equipment, insurance, supplies, and seed.
- 80% of producers sell their product to wholesalers or distributors.
- The most utilized sales channels are in Maine, with sales made to Maine distributors/wholesalers by 53% of respondents, restaurants and markets (47%), direct to consumer (41%), followed by distributors/wholesalers in the U.S. beyond Maine (24%).
- The majority of jobs (63%) are full-time, year-round positions. Only 29% of all jobs are seasonal.
- Farm employees are relatively young, with the largest portion under 35, and many of these young adults have been drawn in from across the country.
- Over two-thirds of primary leaseholders were comparatively older, between the ages of 40 and 69.
- Those who identified as women or nonbinary comprised 29% of primary leaseholders and 24% of the workforce, respectively, over 4x higher than the percentage of female commercial fishers and owners across the U.S. (Posadas, 2025).
- Both primary leaseholders and employees reported very high rates of holding a four-year degree or higher, 89% for primary leaseholders and 71% for employees.

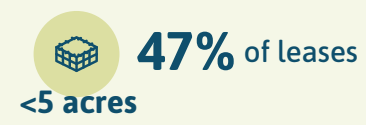
### ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION & EMPLOYMENT



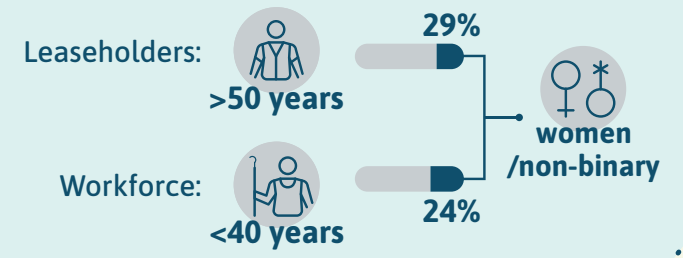
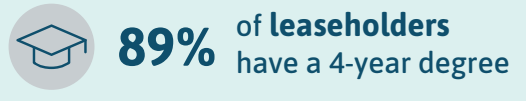
### SALES & TOP SPECIES



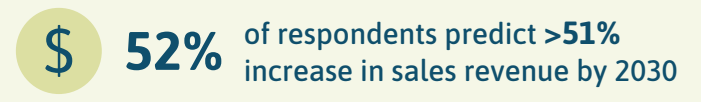
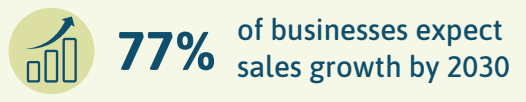
### FARMS & OPERATIONS



### PEOPLE BEHIND THE SECTOR



### FUTURE OUTLOOK



# SURVEY REPORT

This document reports on the **responses from a survey that was issued by the Maine Aquaculture Association (MAA) in the spring of 2024 as a part of the [Maine Aquaculture Economic Contribution Report](#).**

It only reports on direct survey responses, and it does not include the complete economic contribution estimates, calculated via IMPLAN, that are found in the Maine Economic Contribution Report.

## Methodology & Survey Design

The Maine Aquaculture Association (MAA), in collaboration with the Maine Aquaculture Innovation Center (MAIC), conducted a survey to evaluate and quantify the aquaculture sector's expanding role in Maine's economy. MAA designed an online survey instrument consisting of 37 questions and hosted the survey through Qualtrics. Implementation and collection of survey responses took place June-August 2024. MAA worked with Atlantic Corporation, who carried out the preliminary survey data analysis and report preparation.

MAA utilized the Maine Department of Marine Resources lease and limited purpose aquaculture license (LPA) data, along with expert consultation, to compile a list of all aquaculture farms in Maine. MAA contacted all **360 of the identified businesses** via email survey in order to collect **detailed farm-level data for 2023 on revenues, expenses, workforce, and demographics**. A strong total **response rate of 46%** was recorded. The survey received a **total of 161 responses**. 80% of survey respondents were growers, followed by 7% researchers, 5% infrastructure companies that provide goods and services to the sector, and 3% who were either processors or regulators. 6% of respondents characterized their role in the sector as "other".

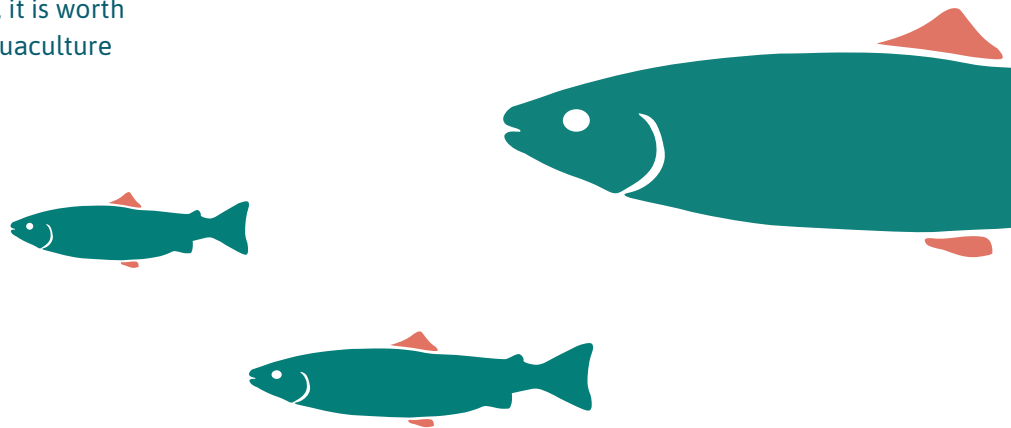


# Findings

## Business Maturity

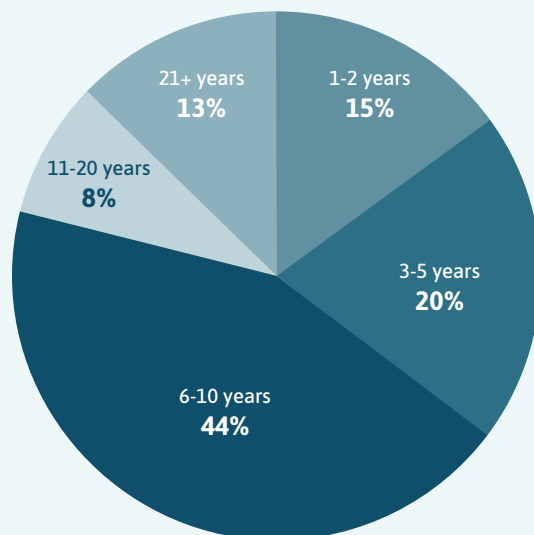
Survey respondents were asked “What year did your company begin operations? Of the 360 business entities contacted in 2024, **133 responded to this question.** These results illustrate a **broad distribution of Maine aquaculture businesses in their startup, growth, and maturity stages.** Thirty-five percent of operations that responded to the survey have been operating for fewer than 5 years, 44% have operated for 6-10 years, and 21% have been in business for more than ten years. This demonstrates three distinct cohorts of aquaculture businesses in terms of years in operation, <5 years, 6-10 years, and 10+ years. The response rates in each of the three size categories were similar. Given that the USDA definition of a beginning farmer is someone who has operated a farm for fewer than ten years, it is worth noting that the vast majority of Maine aquaculture farmers (79%) are beginning farmers.

Slightly under half of the businesses (44%) are 6-10 years old, highlighting the growth of middle-stage businesses. Nearly all of these farms are in a growth stage where they try to find their breakeven point and become profitable. This highlights the to-be-realized potential of Maine aquaculture, as many of the 6–10-year businesses are still growing because they have not yet been able to acquire sufficient lease space to reach their breakeven point. Even amongst Maine’s most ‘mature’ aquaculture businesses—the 21% who have been in operation for more than ten years—a number of them are also expanding. **This is a young sector with growth on its horizon.**



### How many years has your company been in operation?

Distribution of responding companies' number of years in operation





## Farm Size

Survey respondents were asked two questions pertaining to acreage and number of leases/LPAs.

- How many **leases** did your business hold in 2023? Please exclude LPAs
- How many **leased acres** did your business hold in 2023? Please exclude LPAs

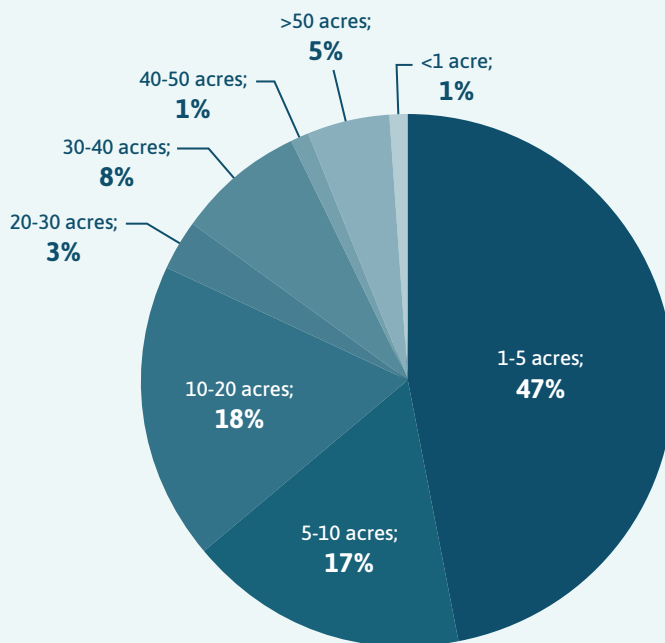
**129 respondents** answered the question “How many leased acres did your business hold in 2023?” 60 respondents did not have any leased acres in 2023, yet many of them held LPAs. The figure below shows the distribution of leased acreage for respondents who stated that they had leased acres in 2023, excluding those who only held LPAs. When compared to DMR lease data, the segments in the figure are, on average, within 3.5 percentage points, highlighting the high degree of accurate representation in this study.

52% of leaseholders that responded to the survey hold more than 5 acres. Those in the largest individual segment of leaseholders, 47%, hold 1-5 acres. This segment represents the small, typically new, up-and-coming, growing businesses that make up this large portion of the sector. Many of these businesses are in their early stages and are expanding to their right size, as detailed in the Business Maturity section, above. Most farmers will not break even, be able to make a living, or be able to sustainably pay workers on a farm under 5 leased acres.

It is hypothesized that many farmers start by using only LPAs to launch their business development cycle. They provide a low barrier to entry and faster way to begin an aquaculture business than the lengthy leasing system. They also give time to improve production practices, dial in locations, and assess financing options while awaiting the leasing process. As of 2021, there were nearly 700 LPAs being utilized by farmers across Maine waters (Sadusky et al., 2022).

### How many leased acres did your business hold in 2023? Please exclude LPAs.

Distribution of leased acreage amongst leaseholders only

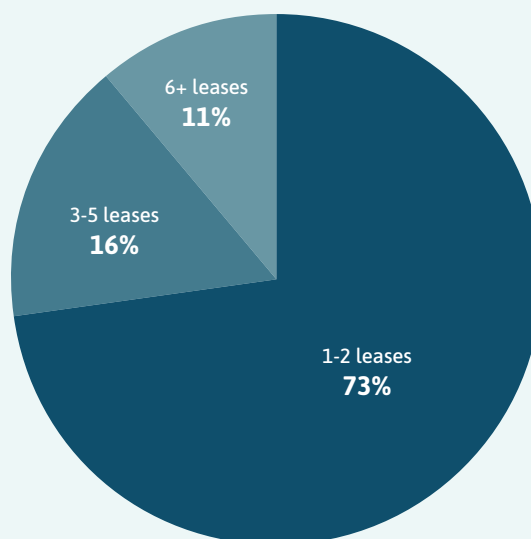


When survey respondents were asked “How many leases did your business hold in 2023?” 59 respondents of the **132 who answered** this question stated that they did not have any leases.

Of the respondents who had leases in 2023, the vast majority (73%) held only 1-2 leases.

### How many leases did your business hold in 2023? Please exclude LPAs.

Distribution of number of leases amongst leaseholders

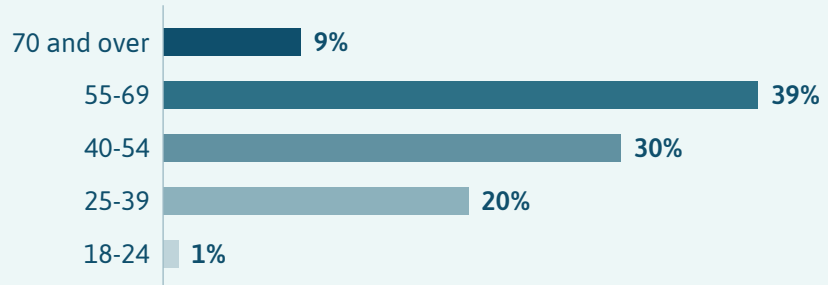


## Primary Leaseholder Demographics

69% of the respondents, who were mostly the primary leaseholder, were between the ages of 40 and 69 years old. This translates to leaseholders who are mostly mid to late-career, with some approaching the retirement stage. 21% of respondents were under 40, and only 9% of respondents were aged 70 and over (see full table in appendix). The data for this question, which represents **69 responses**, illustrates the age distribution of the primary leaseholders, who are typically the business owners, and not that of the workforce as a whole, which skews younger.

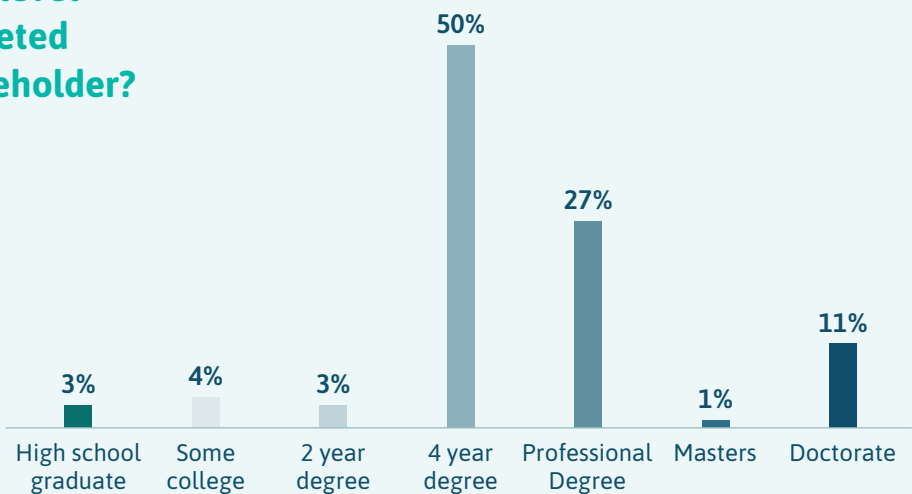
When compared to totals collected by the Small Business Administration, **primary leaseholders tend to be younger than small business owners nationwide**, where 51% are 55 and older (compared to 48%, as shown below), 43% are 35 to 54, and only 6% are 34 and under (SBE, 2019). Although direct comparisons are not available, it appears that, compared to small business owners nationwide, leaseholders are more representative of a younger demographic, especially for those under 40.

### What is the age of the business's primary leaseholder?



The primary leaseholders were very well-educated, with 89% having a four-year degree or higher, well over twice the national average. A total of 70 respondents answered this question.

### What is the highest level of education completed by the primary leaseholder?

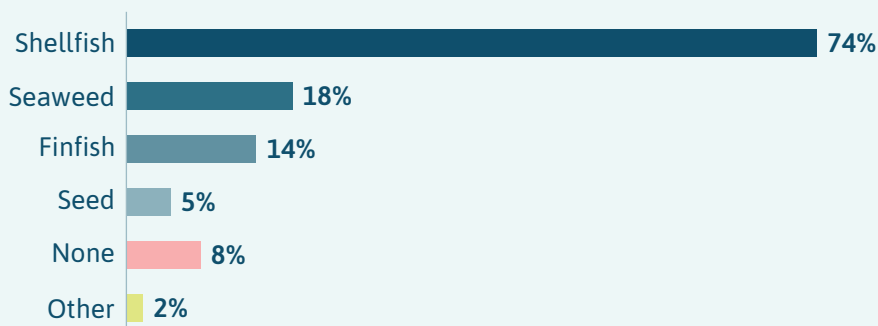


## Sales Revenue

When respondents were asked to name the aquaculture-raised products that their company produced and sold in 2023, **108 responded**. Shellfish (74%) and Seaweed (18%) were the top two products that were selected. This highlights the large proportion of small farms who produce and sell shellfish.

It does not, however, indicate the total value produced by each subsector. By sales revenue, Atlantic salmon and oysters were the top two aquaculture-raised products, followed by blue mussels.

### What aquaculture-raised products did your company produce and sell in 2023? Please select all that apply.



**NOTE:** Finfish includes Tilapia, Yellowtail, Salmon, Brook trout, Rainbow trout, Brown trout, Eel, and Ornamental fish. Shellfish includes Oysters, Hard shell clams, Soft-shell clams, Scallops, and Mussels.



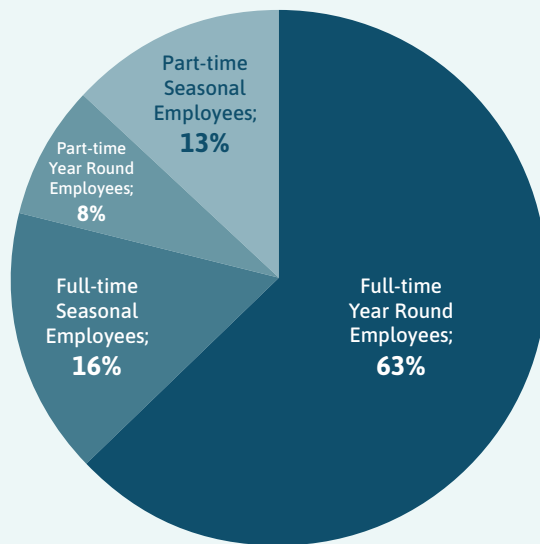
## Employment

**118 respondents** reported a total of 668 full-time, year-round employees (63% of total jobs); 171 (16%) full-time, seasonal employees; 88 (8%) part-time, year-round employees; and 135 (13%) part-time, seasonal employees. These reported numbers may also include owners, although some were likely omitted.

The majority of jobs related to aquaculture production are full-time positions, most of which are considered year-round, even if some employees may experience temporary businesses closures. This level of employment has major economic and social impacts in the often rural and coastal areas where farms are located.

Employee Type	Frequency	Percentage
Full-time Year-Round Employees	668	63%
Full-time Seasonal Employees	171	16%
Part-time, Year-Round Employees	88	8%
Part-time, Seasonal Employees	135	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1062</b>	<b>100%</b>

**How many employees did you have in your company in the following categories in 2023? Please include owners where applicable.**



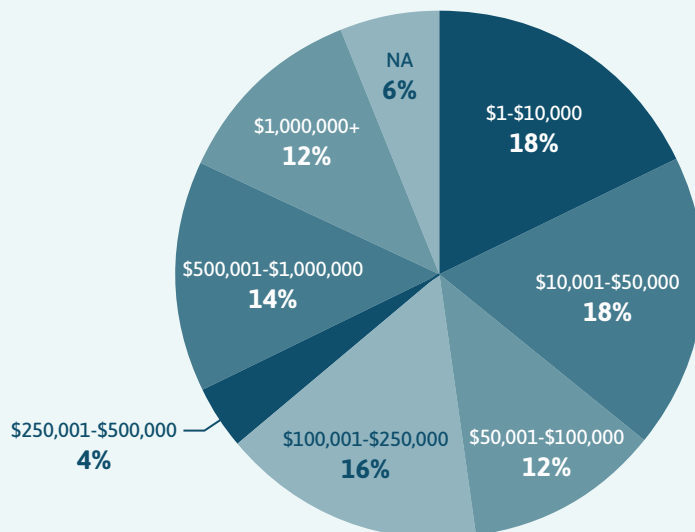
Survey respondents were also asked the question, “What was your company’s total compensation (including benefits) in 2023 to employees and owners?” **30% of respondents reported no compensation to employees and owners** in 2023, reflecting the large number of early-stage, pre-revenue businesses who responded to the survey who do not yet have their first paid employee. It is possible that some did not respond due to a lack of desire to share such data as well. These findings show the sacrifices that many of these entrepreneurs make, especially in their early stages. It can often take 2-3 years of operation for first sales to be made, and at least 5-10 years to turn a profit, depending on the species raised. Of the **111 responses**, 76 (68%) noted a total paid to employees and owners greater than \$0, and 35 (32%) noted \$0 or N/A.

The figure below illustrates the distribution of payroll for revenue-generating companies. It indicates that 46% of the respondents’ reported payroll and benefit expenditures were greater than \$100,000 for each business for employees and owners, yet 48% of businesses remained under \$100,000 of total compensation to employees and owners. This highlights the diversity of farm sizes, and especially of business maturity, within the sector.



### What was your company’s total compensation (including benefits) in 2023 to employees and owners?

Distribution of total compensation paid to employees and owners (including benefits) in 2023



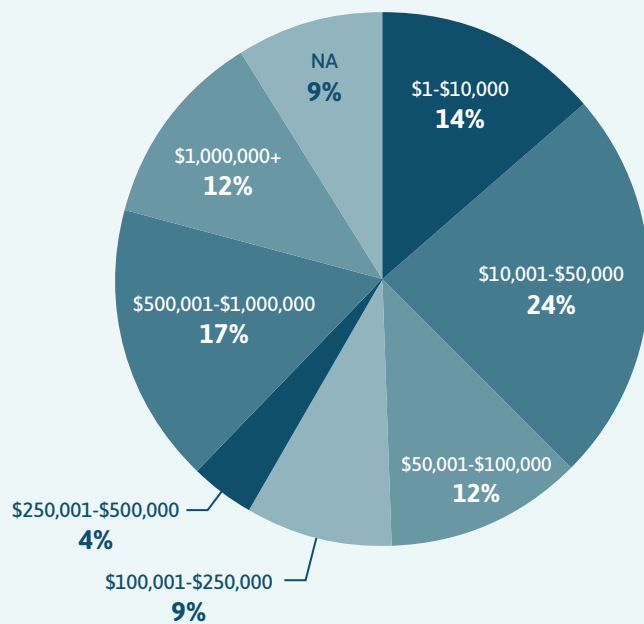
The survey also asked respondents about the company's total compensation (including benefits) for 2023 to employees only.

The figure below illustrates the distribution of payroll for revenue-generating companies, indicating that 50% of the respondents reported payroll and benefit expenditures under \$100,000 for employees and 42% over \$100,000.

This again highlights the small, yet growing, size of the businesses, along with the diversity of scale and maturity of businesses in the sector. Of the **112 responses**, 67 (60%) noted an amount greater than \$0, while 45 (40%) noted either \$0 or N/A.

### What was your company's total compensation (including benefits) in 2023 to employees only? (\$)

Distribution of total compensation paid to employees only (including benefits) in 2023



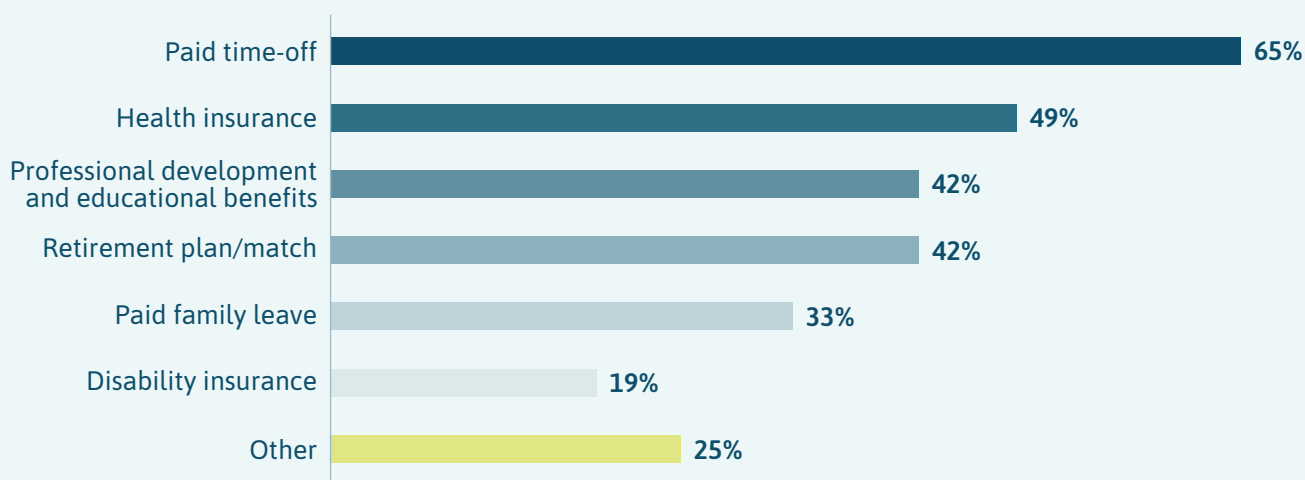
Note: Percentage excluding pre-revenue businesses.



Respondents were also asked about the benefits offered to their employees, and **57 answered**. Paid time-off and health insurance were the primary benefits, followed by retirement plan/match, and professional development and educational benefits. The majority of businesses who responded to this question offered paid time-off, followed by health insurance.

A notable number of the farms also offer retirement plan/match and professional development and educational benefits, all highlighting the investment of businesses in their employees. It is worth noting that the numbers below reflect the percentages only of those who responded to this question.

### Which of the following benefits do you offer to employees? Please select all that apply.



## Products & Services Sales

**133 responded** to the question “In which of the following categories did you earn revenue in 2023?”.

These products and services sales highlight sources of revenue for farms above and beyond their aquaculture product sales. The main categories in which the respondents earned this supplementary revenue included “Services provided” (18%) and “Tourism” (13%).

While some separate businesses have been built solely to cater to aquaculture tourism, some aquaculture farms have also found that tours can be an additional, sometimes significant source of income, especially in tough years. On some farms, tours, much like other services offered (e.g. mooring services) are also used as a form of financial risk management.

**In which of the following categories did you earn revenue in 2023? Please select all that apply.**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Services provided	24	18%
Tourism	17	13%
Food service	14	11%
Catering	9	7%
Rent received	6	5%
Consulting	5	4%
Environmental assessment	3	2%
Processing	2	2%
Other	53	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Other mentions:**

- None

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- No income yet

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- No revenue

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- Pond stocking, live fish wholesale

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- Sold to other farmers

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- Farming

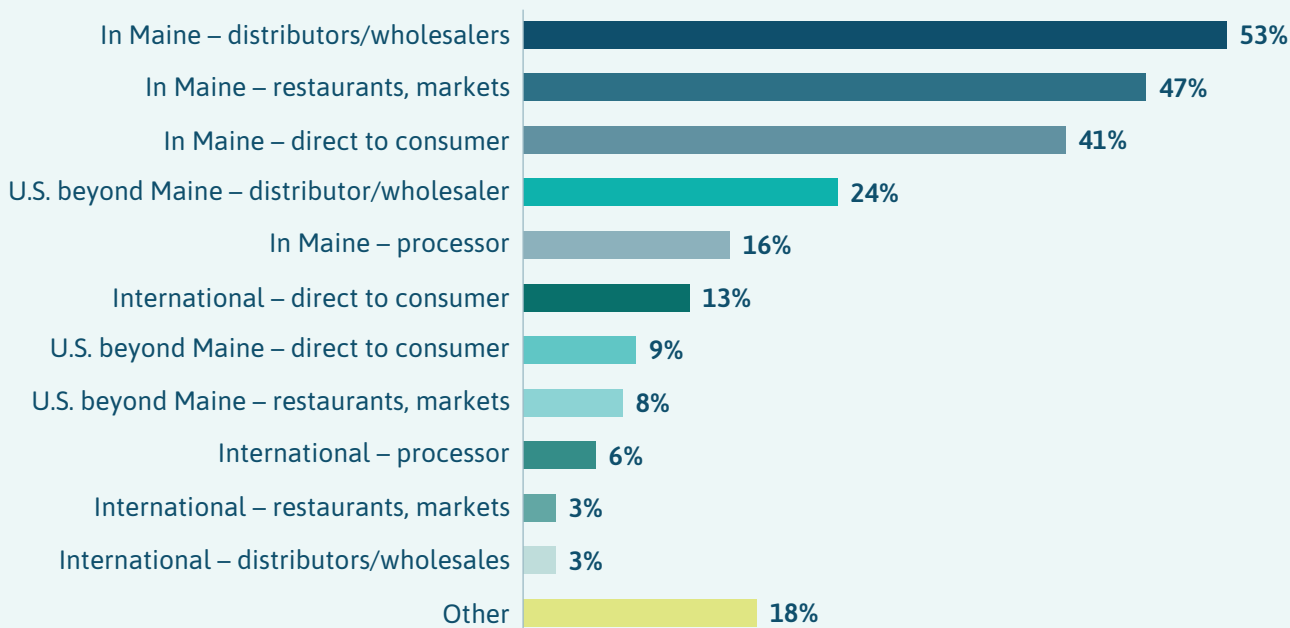
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- Secondhand gear, merchandise

Q14 asked respondents about which sales channels they utilize at the farm gate level, and 85 responded. 53% of respondents stated that their products were sold in Maine to distributors/wholesalers, while 47% sold to restaurants and markets in Maine, and 41% sold direct to consumers in Maine.

These totals represent the percentage of producers who used these sales channels, not the volume of their product within these sales channels. While sales within Maine dominate, there is a notable level of sales made through distributors/wholesalers in the U.S. beyond Maine.

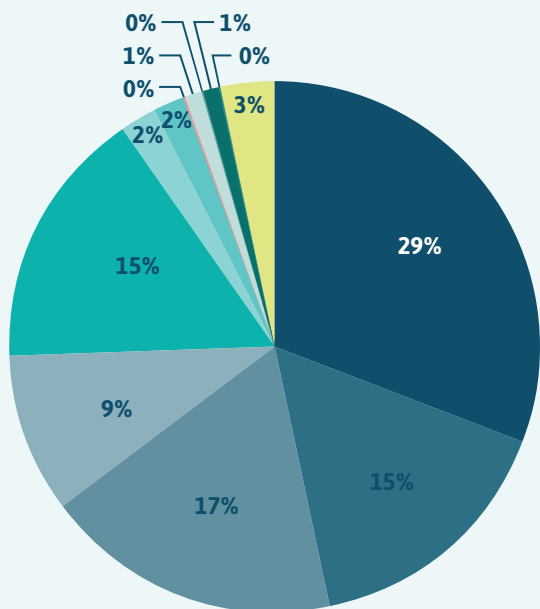
### Into what sales channels were your products sold in 2023?



In Q15, below, respondents were further asked what percentage of their products were sold into these same sales channels, and **75 answered**. This does not show the percentage of farmers who use these methods, such as in Q14, above. Rather, Q15 shows what percentage of the respondents’ product goes into each category. For example, 29% “In Maine – distributor/ wholesaler” means that the average respondent sells 29% of their product in Maine to a distributor/ wholesaler. As shown below, sales in Maine amassed the majority of volume where products are sold at 76% (with 31% sold to distributors/wholesalers in Maine, 17% to restaurants and markets in Maine, 18% direct to consumer in Maine, and 10% to processors in Maine).

The next most notable sales channel was sales into the U.S. beyond Maine via distributor/wholesaler, which comprised 15% of the product. This highlights that the vast majority of Maine’s products are sold by farmers, at the farm level, within state. While this does not mean that products do not leave the state, it does still show that there is room for growth in farm-level sales outside of Maine, whether through direct or indirect sales channels.

### What percentage of your products are sold into the following sales channels?



- In Maine – distributors/wholesale
- In Maine – restaurants, markets
- In Maine – direct to consumer
- In Maine – processor
- U.S beyond Maine – distributor/wholesaler
- U.S beyond Maine – restaurants, markets
- U.S beyond Maine – direct to consumer
- U.S beyond Maine – processor
- International – distributors/wholesales
- International – restaurants, markets
- International – direct to consumer
- International – processor
- Other

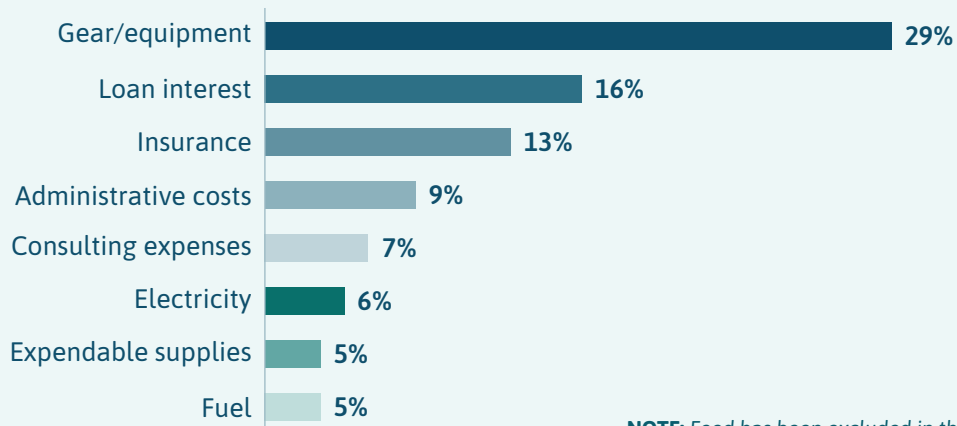
### Business Expenditures

Respondents were given a list of categories and asked about their expenditure in each category in 2023. They reported a total of \$27,041,799 for all expenditures in 2023. This data is based on the **87 respondents** who answered this question.

Gear/equipment, loan interest, insurance, and administrative costs were the main high expenditures. The figure below shows the top categories with high expenditures. It should be noted that labor was not included in this list of expenditures. Further information on aquaculture cost structures can be explored in Brayden & Coleman (2024) and Engle et al., (2023).



### Approximately how much did you spend in each of the following categories in 2023 (excluding labor)?

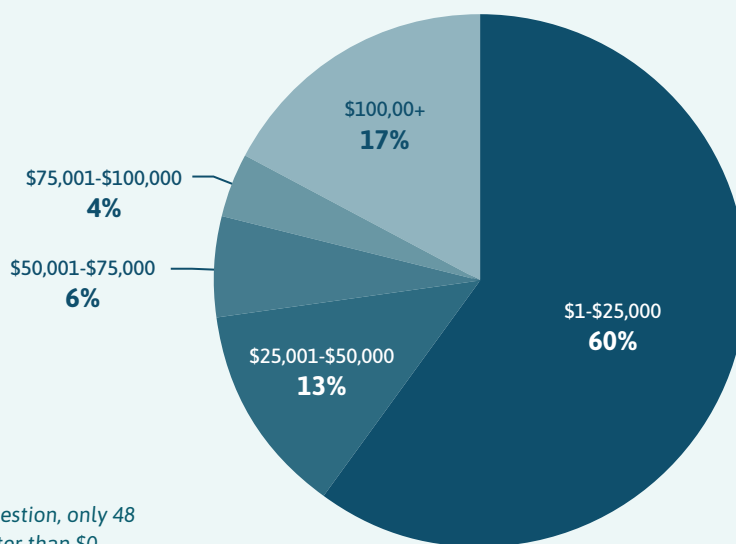


**NOTE:** Feed has been excluded in this section.

Survey respondents were also asked Q17 regarding capital investment. A total of \$4,286,759 in capital expenditures over the last year were reported.

### Approximately how much did you spend on capital investments in 2023 (\$) (Boat, truck, tanks, buildings, docks, etc.)

Distribution of farms at each level of investment



**NOTE:** While 79 respondents answered this question, only 48 respondents mentioned a dollar amount greater than \$0.

A majority of respondents (60%) said they spent between \$1 - \$25,000 on capital investments in 2023. However, 17% made substantial investments of over \$100,000. Of the 79 respondents who answered this question, only 48 noted a non-zero value.

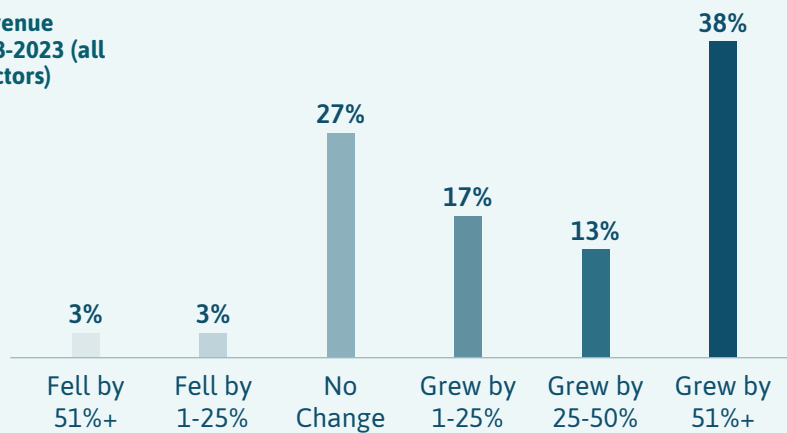
## Past and Future Sales Growth

Of the **64 businesses** that responded, 95% reported stable revenue or growth between 2018-2023, with a median sales revenue growth of 37.5%. This represents a notably high level of business growth and thus success, with very little sales revenue decrease.

It also highlights the early-growth stage in which most Maine aquaculture businesses currently exist. It is also notable that this growth occurred while COVID significantly decreased restaurant sales nationally during this period. Prior to COVID, roughly 80% of seafood consumed in the U.S. was consumed in restaurants.

### By how much has your company's sales revenue changed between 2018-2023?

Self-reported sales revenue changes between 2018-2023 (all Maine aquaculture sectors)



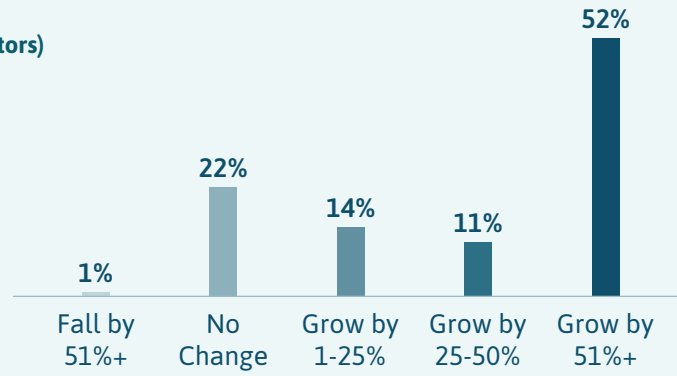
**NOTE:** The median percentage of sales revenue change was growth of 37.5 %.

Survey respondents were also asked, “By how much do you expect your company’s sales revenue to change by 2030? Of the 77 total responses to this question, only 1% expected a fall in revenue by 2030, and only 22% of businesses predicted their revenue would not change. There appears to be substantial optimism in the aquaculture sector with 77% predicting sales revenue growth by 2030, and 52% of respondents predicting 51% or greater increase in sales revenue in the same time frame.

Again, this highlights the early-stage growth of aquaculture businesses in Maine, with much potential growth still to be realized, provided that appropriate regulations and access to capital are provided. The median sales growth projection by 2030 is 75%, a rate that again corroborates the anticipated early-stage small business growth.

## By how much do you expect your company's sales revenue to change by 2030?

Self-reported sales growth projections by 2030 (all sectors)



**NOTE:** The median sales projection of each business is 75% growth by 2030.



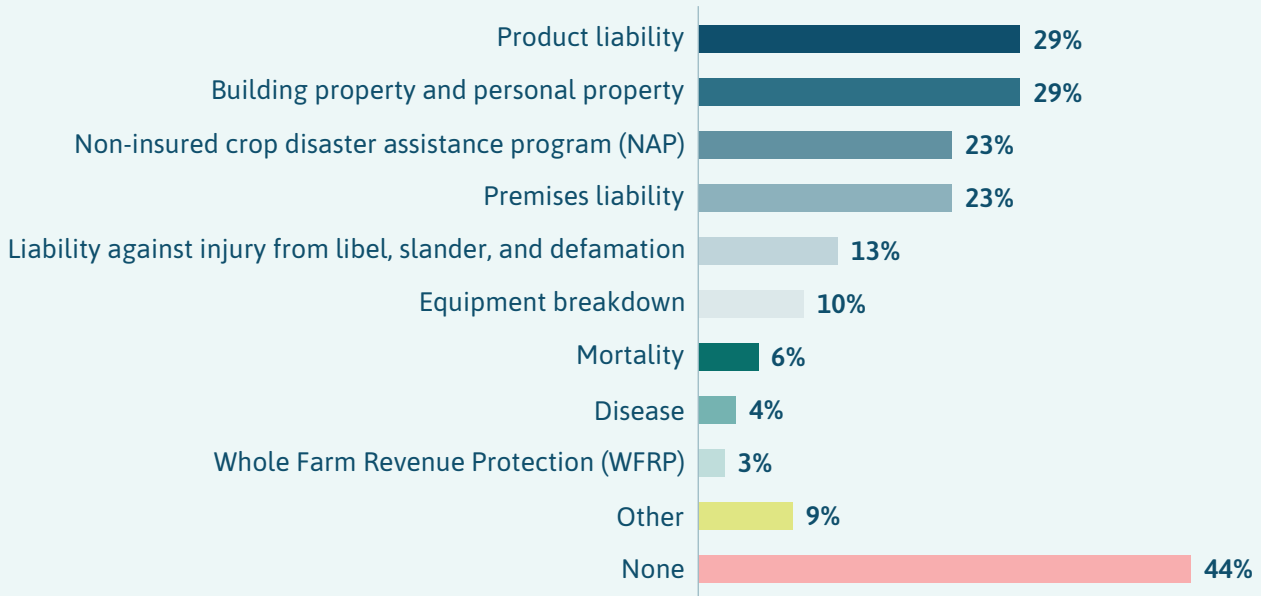
## Insurance

Of the **70 responses**, the top insurance policies held included “Building property and personal property” (29%) and “Product liability” (29%), followed by the non-insured crop disaster assistance program (NAP) at 23%, along with premises liability at 23%.

For comparison, a 2023 Next insurance survey of small businesses found that 29% of small businesses do not hold any small business insurance (Next, 2025). The Next survey also found that 52% of businesses had general liability insurance, 20% held professional liability insurance, and 21% held commercial property insurance.

It is challenging to compare across individual types of insurance due to different names for the categories used in the two different surveys. Looking at insurance more broadly, 44% of this survey’s respondents indicated that they held no insurance policies, compared to only 28% of those who responded to the Next survey, indicating that many fewer aquaculture businesses hold insurance when compared to all other small businesses.

### Is your firm insured with any types of the following insurance policies against aquaculture risks? Please select all that apply.

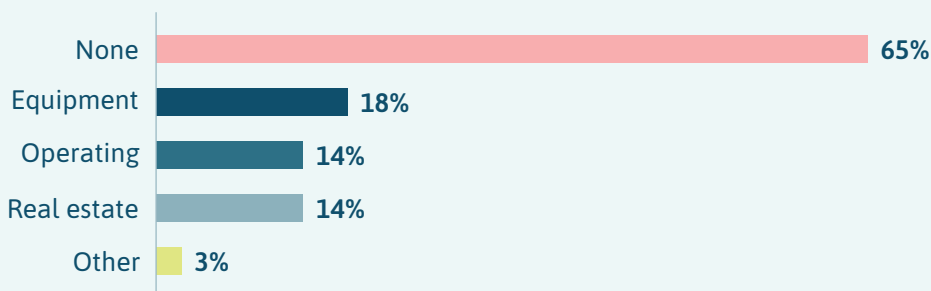


## Financing

When asked about the type of loans (if any) their business had secured, of the **79 respondents**,

a majority (65%) stated that they did not have any loans, while 35% did hold one or multiple types of loan(s).

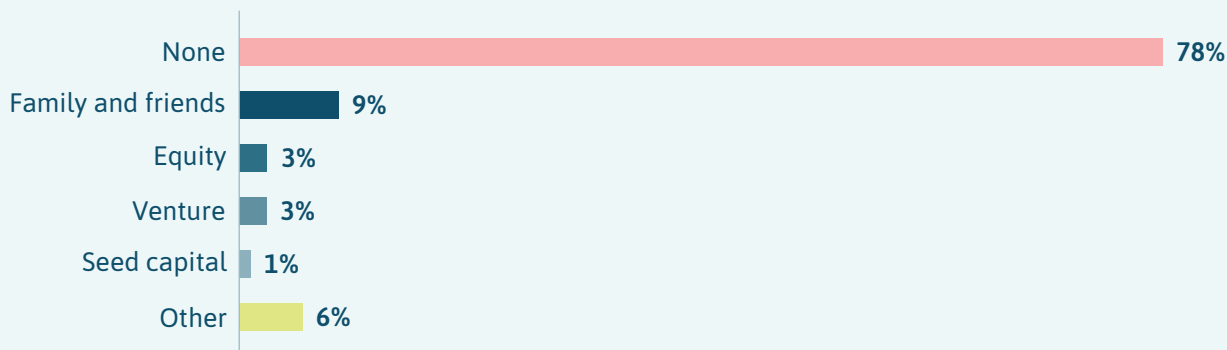
### What types of loans has your business secured, if any? Please select all that apply.



Respondents were also asked about the types of outside investments their business had secured. Of the total **79 responses**, most respondents (78%) stated that their

business had not secured any outside investment, although almost 10% received investment from family and friends.

### What types of investment has your business secured? Please select all that apply.



# DISCUSSION

**The survey report shows that this sector is young and growing.** 79% of respondents have been in operation for fewer than 10 years, 95% of respondents reported stable revenue or growth between 2018-2023, with a median growth of 37.5%, and 77% are expecting sales revenue growth by 2030, with a median of 75% growth.

**This cohort of early-stage businesses is optimistic, and they intend to grow their businesses, and thus, the sector.** Many of these businesses played a role in the more than tripling of shellfish sales from 2014 to 2023.

**The relatively small size and young age of the farms is an important characteristic for the future of the sector.** If these small start-up businesses are going to survive and continue to contribute to the state's economy, they will need to grow to a scale that ensures their sustainable economic viability. **Access to capital and a predictable and timely leasing system will be critical to their ability to grow.** These findings are corroborated by the Maine Aquaculture Roadmap's goals: one (Develop a streamlined licensing and permitting process that balances the rights of an applicant and the public) and four (Make Maine a leader in triple bottom line sustainable aquaculture: social, economic, environmental), which reflect the input of over 140 participants from across Maine (Sadusky et al., 2022).

Interestingly, it is not only the businesses that are relatively young. **The largest portion of full-time, year-round workers on the farms are under 35. This is a well-educated workforce** where over 70% of workers hold a bachelor's degree. While the majority identify as male, it is worth noting that those who identify as women or nonbinary comprise 24% of the workforce and 29% of primary leaseholders, over four times higher than the proportion of female commercial fishers and owners across the U.S. (5.5%) (Posadas, 2025). **This sector draws in and retains young people from both Maine hometowns and from across the country alike.** These people want to launch a career in a field which they enjoy working in, and feel good about. Additionally, the sector offers entrepreneurial opportunities to those who want to work or build a business on the water but may not have had the generational access that other opportunities often require. This also helps to **attract and retain talented, younger, working people in the rural communities where farming often occurs and such qualities are in high demand.**



In terms of the economics, the top three species in descending order by value in 2023 are Atlantic salmon, eastern oysters, and blue mussels. The total economic contributions are detailed in the [Maine Aquaculture Economic Contribution Report](#).

Although sales do occur across the U.S. and the world, the most utilized farm-level sales channels are within Maine. Sales from Maine's farms are made to Maine distributors/wholesalers by 53% of respondents, Maine restaurants and markets by 47%, direct to Maine consumer by 41%, and followed by distributors/wholesalers in the U.S. beyond Maine by 24%. Although many of the farm-level sales are made within Maine, this does not mean that the products are not leaving Maine, as many distributors and wholesalers work primarily in larger city markets (i.e. Boston, New York, Chicago, etc.). While the focus of farm-level sales currently lies in Maine, other work indicates that producers are increasingly looking to more directly expand their markets across the country (Sillsby, 2022). Given that many businesses are still in their growth phase and plan to expand, it is likely that there will be an increase in products being sold from the farm-level to out of state, where over 150 million consumers reside within a 24-hour truck ride from Maine. Additionally, it is expected that sales will also continue to increase in-state, especially given the increased demand for aquaculture products via culinary and tourism ventures.

On the farm level, shellfish and seaweed farms reported that their greatest cost is total compensation to employees and owners, followed by gear/equipment, insurance, supplies, and seed. This remains in-line with Maine farms at large, where labor continues to be the largest expenditure category (NASS, 2022).

The findings in this survey report highlight that the Maine aquaculture sector is currently comprised of mostly beginning businesses (<10 years) who operate on a very small scale (1-20 acres) and who sell their products to Maine buyers.

Prior work has shown that the probability of an aquaculture business being profitable tends to increase with farm size. The scale necessary to make a profit cannot typically be reached on under 5 acres, and the right, sustainable size for a farm is determined by a variety of factors and business decisions (Brayden & Coleman, 2022; Engle et al., 2023; Parker et al., 2020). As such, many of the sector's business owners are hungry for the growth required to reach their sustainable business size, which will require additional lease space, access to capital, and often farm-level sales made outside of Maine.

**Maine's aquaculture sector is poised for growth—both for the businesses and for the workers within it. It sits in a unique position to carry on Maine's working waterfront culture, communities, and traditions for a variety of people. It offers an inclusive opportunity to both entrepreneurs and workers, from the saltiest multi-generational fishing families to the newcomers. Sector participants are passionate, young, and ready to grow their careers and businesses. In order to ensure that these opportunities remain possible, access to capital and a predictable and timely leasing system will be critical.**



# APPENDIX

Which of the following most closely describes your role in Maine’s aquaculture sector?

Role	Frequency	Percentage
Grower	129	80%
Researcher	11	7%
Infrastructure	8	5%
Food Service (Processor/Regulator)	4	3%
Other	9	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100%</b>



How many employees did you have in your company in the following categories in 2023? Please include owners where applicable

No. of Full-time Year-Round Employees	Frequency	Total Number
0	53	0
1	15	15
2	10	20
3	9	27
4	3	12
5	3	15
6	3	18
8	2	16
9	4	36
10	6	60
11	1	11
12	3	36
14	2	28
18	1	18
20+	6	356
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>668</b>

No. of Full-time Seasonal Employees	Frequency	Total Number
0	70	0
1	11	11
2	13	26
2.5	1	2.5
3	5	15
4	5	20
5	2	10
7	2	14
10	1	10
12	2	24
18	1	18
20	1	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>170.5</b>

No. of Part-time Year-Round Employees	Frequency	Total Number
0	75	0
0.5	1	0.5
1	13	13
2	11	22
3	3	9
4	2	8
5	2	10
7	1	7
8	1	8
10	1	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>87.5</b>



No. of Part-time Seasonal Employees	Frequency	Total Number
0	62	0
0.5	1	0.5
1	17	17
2	13	26
3	6	18
4	4	16
5	2	10
8	1	8
9	1	9
10	3	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>134.5</b>

Total number of Jobs = 1060.5 rounded to 1061 Jobs



### What was the total value of money loaned to your business as of the end of 2023?

The total value of money loaned to businesses equaled \$9,450,965.73.

Out of a total of 75 respondents who answered this question, 52 respondents did not take any loans.

Loan amount	Frequency	Percentage
\$0	52	0
\$1-\$50,000	8	35%
\$50,000-\$100,000	2	9%
\$150,000-\$200,000	7	30%
\$20,000+	6	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>23</b>

### What is the total value of investment that your business has secured? (\$)

The reported total investment secured by all of the businesses who responded to this question equals \$11,070,546.

### How much aquaculture grant funding is your organization awarded per year, on average? (\$)

Most businesses claimed to receive grant funding of between \$1-\$100,000 USD.

Grant amount \$	Frequency	Percentage
0-10k	69	82%
10k-25k	3	4%
25k-50k	1	1%
50k-100k	3	4%
100k-200k	2	2%
200k-300k	1	1%
300k-400k	1	1%
700k+	4	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100%</b>

### In what town is your business primarily located?

Region	Number of Businesses
Inland Maine	2
Acadia	5
Downeast	9
Southern Maine	20
Midcoast	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>



### What best describes your current occupation with the aquaculture business? E.g. Owner, manager, farm hand, etc.

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Owner	54	79%
Manager	6	9%
Researcher	3	4%
Director	2	3%
Farmer	2	3%
Recreational oyster grower	1	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Which most closely describes your gender?

This question refers to the survey respondent, not the full workforce. Although the Maine aquaculture sector is still majority operated by men, it has seen a growing number of women entering it, eclipsing participation rates seen in commercial fishing. For instance, in 2021, 15% of lobster licenses were held by women, and this survey saw participation from 29% of women, almost double the rate.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	49	70%
Female	20	29%
Prefer not to say	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Which of the following most closely aligns with your ethnicity?

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percentage
White	68	97%
Asian	1	1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>

### What is the average age of those who work at your business?

In contrast to the demographic data for the leaseholder, the workforce tends to skew younger, with the majority of the workforce under 50, and almost half under 35.

Age (Years)	Frequency	Percentage
18-20	1	2%
20-35	29	46%
36-50	15	24%
51-65	13	21%
66+	5	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Approximately what number of your workers would self-identify in the categories below? We are hoping to learn more about the composition of who works in the Maine aquaculture sector.**

Women are entering the aquaculture workforce in notable numbers. Men only comprise 61% of the workforce, and women comprise 19%. The remainder of participants either preferred not to say, or identified as non-binary/third gender, or transgender man or transgender woman. Although the statistics do not offer the clearest picture, anecdotal evidence also supports that a larger number of women, and others who do not identify as male, are entering Maine’s aquaculture workforce.

Gender	Number
Male	311
Female	97
Non-binary/third gender	1
Prefer not to say	95
Transgender man	3
Transgender woman	1
Agender	0
I prefer to self-describe	1

**Approximately what number of your workers would be placed in the following categories regarding their highest level of education completed?**

The aquaculture workforce is quite well-educated, with over 70% holding a 4 year degree or higher.

Education	Number
Less than high school	12
High school graduate	67
Some college	38
2 year degree	9
4 year degree	209
Professional degree	76
Doctorate	17

**Approximately what number of workers would self-identify in the categories below?**

Although the responses show a predominately white workforce, the rates of participation of people of color remain in line with or slightly above Maine’s demographics.

Ethnicity	Number
White	274
Black or African American	6
American Indian or Alaska Native	7
Asian	6
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	3
Other	4

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