

Sea Grant Postcard from the Field



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Ocean to Table

Georgia Sea Grant partnership offers hands-on workshops that prepare extension agents to share health benefits of Georgia seafood



"I've lived in Georgia since 2000, and I didn't know that we produced so much seafood. I knew I was going to learn a lot in this program, but I had no idea that I was going to get to try all the different types of seafood and get so much hands-on experience. And I went on my first boat ride." - La Keshia Levi, workshop participant



Ocean to Table

Barbara Worley grew up on the coast of North Carolina and considers herself an oyster connoisseur. La Keshia Levi, on the other hand, shudders at the thought of eating an oyster. But after attending a two-day Ocean to Table workshop, both [University of Georgia \(UGA\) Extension](#) agents are prepared to encourage residents in their counties to eat more Georgia seafood.

The Ocean to Table series, which is designed to increase awareness of Georgia seafood, is presented through a partnership between UGA Extension and [Georgia Sea Grant](#) and is funded by a UGA Extension Innovation Grant.

"Living here on the coast, I eat Georgia seafood, but I see that not everyone in Georgia does," said extension agent Jackie Ogden, who worked with Georgia Sea Grant to develop the program. Ogden said she knew the key to reaching Georgians was to train her fellow extension agents, who share health and wellness information year-round with their communities.

Americans consume a total of 4.8 million pounds of seafood annually, but the average American eats less than 15 pounds of seafood a year, according to Bryan Fluech, associate Marine Extension director at Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant.

Fluech believes Georgians would increase their consumption of seafood if they knew that it contains essential vitamins and minerals.

"People may think they don't like fish, but there are hundreds of species, and they don't all taste the same," Fluech said. "Fish is very affordable, too, if you just learn to diversify your palate."

The most recent Ocean to Table workshop was held in May 2018 on Skidaway Island, Georgia. Participants cracked and ate blue crab, had a low country boil, took a boat trip, tried their hand at crab fishing and toured Sea Grant's oyster hatchery at the [Shellfish Research Lab](#).

[Read more about the Ocean to Table workshops](#)

Image description: Three photos (courtesy of Sharon Dowdy unless otherwise noted); from left: Georgia Sea Grant Associate Director Bryan Fluech (center) teaches Ocean to Table participants how to eat steamed oysters; boiled blue crab harvested in Georgia; and Georgia Sea Grant seafood specialist Tori Stivers (right) serves fried crab prepared by Southside Shellfish in Savannah, GA (credit: Emily Woodward).

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