

## **Mariculture**

Mariculture or aquatic farming involves the farming of shellfish and plants in marine waters. In Alaska, aquatic farmers culture oysters, clams, mussels, scallops, seaweed, and sea cucumbers. The Departments of Natural Resources and Fish and Game manage and lease sites for aquatic farming. Sixty five aquatic farm sites were authorized with production in 2004 of over a half million dollars. Aquatic farms provide income and economic stability to many rural coastal communities, and help diversify the State's seafood industry. With the worldwide demand for seafood increasing, along with Alaska's clean waters and thousands of miles of coastline, the mariculture industry has potential for substantial growth in the state.