

Freshwater Aquaculture Pre-Feasibility Assessment Checklist
Central Canada AACI

General Prefeasibility Considerations	Yes	No
1. What is your purpose in pursuing aquaculture (e.g., personal consumption, community consumption, commercial production, fishery enhancement, or fingerling supply)? Comment: _____ _____		
2. Do you know what species of aquaculture you would like to pursue?		
3. Type of production? (i.e., cage culture, raceway, tank, closed containment, etc.)		
4. Do you have a site or potential sites in mind?		
5. If multiple sites, do you have a process for assessing them?		

Physical Feasibility	Yes	No
1. Does the site have good flow?		
2. Does it have acceptable water quality?		
3. What are the seasonal water temperatures in the water column at the site?		
4. Have water quality and currents been measured in all seasons?		
5. What is the nature of the water column at the site? Does it have thermal stratification in the major growing season?		
6. How exposed is the site and from what direction(s)? Does exposure match predominate wind direction?		
7. Is the prospective culture site located near the market and processing facilities?		
8. Is the site sufficiently large for expansion if desired in the future?		
9. Can the site be made suitable for aquaculture production with an acceptable amount of investment?		
10. Do you live close enough to the culture site to visit and monitor as needed, and to ensure security?		
11. Can you prevent wild fish, birds and other predators, diseases, and parasites from entering or impacting your system?		
12. Can you treat diseases and parasites that may infect your fish?		
13. Is the site easily accessible year round for you and transport trucks?		

Economic Feasibility	Yes	No
1. Have you developed a realistic written business plan with monthly objectives and projected cash flows for the first year and annually for each of the next three to five years?		
2. Do you own or have access to property needed for the proposed aquaculture operation?		
3. Have you determined an approximate cost for new infrastructure construction or site improvements?		
4. Do you own or have access to any of the necessary equipment (e.g., pumps, tanks, boats)?		
5. Can you secure the capital for start-up and operation at a reasonable cost?		
6. What are your potential sources of capital?		
7. Will your lender accommodate your production/marketing cycle (which differs from traditional livestock or row crops)?		
8. Is the profit potential for aquaculture higher than that of other possible investments?		
9. Will the expected profit be adequate compensation for your labor and resources?		
10. Can you afford to wait 6 to 18 or more months for income until your first crop attains marketable size and can be sold?		
11. Do you have an adequate cash reserve for unanticipated rests (e.g., equipment failure, system modification, crop losses)?		

Market	Yes	No
1. Is there an established market for your fish?		
2. Is there a market for your fish when you plan to sell them?		
3. Will fish be available year-round if so required by the market?		
4. Are other fish products available at prices lower than your profitable selling price that will out-compete you in the market?		
5. Do you have an alternative marketing strategy on which to fall back?		

Marketing Considerations	Yes	No
1. Have you assessed the existing situation (e.g., market size and demands, potential competitors) and determined an area where you can compete effectively?		
2. Have you identified primary and alternate markets?		
3. Do you know in what form you will market your product (e.g., alive, head-off split dressed fillets)?		
4. Can you continuously harvest and market your product throughout much or all of the year?		
5. Do you have the means to harvest handle hold and transport your product? If desirable, can you join or form an aquaculture cooperative?		
6. Are you familiar with legal issues of marketing your product?		
7. Do you have the resources to construct and operate a Health Department-approved facility if fish will be processed (e.g. dressed, filleted)?		

Personal/Community Considerations	Yes	No
1. Are you willing to work long, hard and irregular hours (e.g., 16 hours/day, 7 days/week)?		
2. Do you get along well and communicate effectively with people? (Producers not only grow fish, they must also promote and market themselves and their product.)		
3. Are you comfortable with mathematical problem-solving and mechanical troubleshooting?		
4. Will you seek help when needed?		
5. Do you personally have the technical expertise with fish or shellfish to manage the operation?		
6. Can you afford to hire an experienced technician?		
7. Do you know others in the business that will provide help or information?		
8. Are you aware of an aquaculture producer association that you can join?		
9. Do you access information about aquaculture?		
10. Are you willing to take a course in aquaculture or attend "how to" workshops to become informed of current practices and new developments?		

Risks: Are you equipped to handle the following challenges or problems	Yes	No
1. Poor water quality?		
2. Fish disease and parasites?		
3. Poachers and vandals?		
4. Potential chemical contamination?		
5. Business management and taxation?		