Remote Setting Oysters: Constructing Your System

REMOTE SETTING OYSTER LARVAE MAY SEEM LIKE a task for experts, but the set-up is relatively simple and can be done by most anyone. The basic equipment for a setting system includes a tank, air lines, a blower, a cover, and a seawater pump and filter.

TANK
The tank can be of any shape; you can make it yourself from plywood and fiberglass, cement or order a ready-made plastic one. The tank volume depends on the amount of seed you want to produce from each batch. Learn more about how to calculate how many larvae are needed for your tank size on the oyster page of the LFF website.

- Avoid metal. If using cement, make sure sides are smooth. Regardless of material, the tank’s interior should be a light color, as larvae like to set on a dark surface.
- Tank should have a 2-inch drain on the bottom for easier draining and cleaning.
- If you construct your own tank, thoroughly soak it to leach out toxic chemicals. Completely fill the tank with water and soak for at least two days. Drain, and repeat twice more.
- Use a tank cover (like tightly fitted tarp) to keep rainwater out and keep interior darkened.

WATER PUMP & FILTER
You will need a seawater pump to get water into your system, and a filter to catch sediment.

- Locate the pump near the water to eliminate impeller cavitation (crunching/grinding noise).
- Keep the pump’s intake off the bottom and away from boat wheel wash in shallow water.
- Add a screen to the end of the intake pipe to keep debris out.
- Filter bags should be rated for 50 microns.

CULTCH MATERIAL
The amount of cultch material required should fit tank design and return expectations. Rule of thumb for tank size:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultch Material per Bushel</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 bushel</td>
<td>200 lbs</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 bushels (or 153 sacks)</td>
<td>1,000 lbs</td>
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It is typical in the Gulf of Mexico to harvest 1-2 bushels of oysters for every bushel of spat-on-shell planted when conditions such as salinity and temperature are normal.

LARVAE
Purchase enough larvae to set 100 per individual oyster shell (or similar amount of cultch material) in the setting tank. The tank described above (~3,000 gallons) requires 10.5 million eyed larvae ($2,625-4,200 [2020 LDWF MCV Oyster Hatchery prices]).