

Chebeague Community,

Beth and I want to notify the community that we each have submitted an application to the Department of Marine Resources for a 4 acre kelp aquaculture farm. You all have seen the growth in kelp aquaculture over the last 5 years, there are several sites within the town of Chebeague waters and Casco Bay. Beth and I are the first Chebeague residents to apply for kelp farms because like the fishing families of previous generations here, harvesting multiple species is the key to avoiding over dependence on one fishery. The sites on our applications are roughly 600 feet off the shore running from Fenderson road to Springettes.

The kelp farm surface buoys that you see around Chebeague and little Chebeague support a series of horizontal lines which kelp spores attach to and grow during the winter months. All of the buoys and ropes are placed on the sites in November and December. Kelp seed is supplied by a hatchery and the kelp grows naturally throughout the winter. Harvesting occurs during April and May and all of the lines and buoys are removed during the summer.

Maine is leading the nation in the kelp aquaculture business. The market possibilities are exciting and it has the added benefit of being labeled a “natural climate solution” by the Maine climate council. We are hopeful that this will provide an opportunity for us and other Chebeaguers to maintain our marine heritage that has defined Chebeague.

Please if you have questions feel free to reach out to us anytime, we hope for your support and are willing to address your questions or concerns.

-Jeff and Beth Putnam