



Feeding Individuals to Support Health

The FISH (Feeding Individuals to Support Health) Project began in 2017 as a unique partnership to provide healthy fish to Baltimore residents.

Since then, **over 13,000 pounds of fish** were grown at the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology (IMET), processed by JJ McDonnell, and distributed by the Maryland Food Bank to **serve 23,600 meals**. This was all with the support of United Way of Central Maryland and McCormick's Flavor for Life.

This project draws on the strengths of all the partners to contribute to sustainable aquaculture research, workforce development, and food security.

IMET has expertise in growing fish in a sustainable recirculating aquaculture system. IMET was able to further refine the process and verified that fish produced in IMET had negligible levels of mercury and arsenic, a major concern in wild-caught fish.

Five youth interns from Baltimore City learned about the science of recirculating aquaculture systems and helped raise fish from fingerlings to harvest size. Four high school interns presented their research project at the District of Columbia Metropolitan Branch Science Fair.

Fish was distributed by the Maryland Food Bank with recipes from McCormick.

From tank to table, this program supports environmental and human health, building stronger families and communities.

FISH Goals

Provide a Sustainable Protein Source

Promote Healthy Eating Habits

Support Baltimore Residents

Partners

Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology

- Grows fish in a recirculating aquaculture system
- Employs Baltimore City High School students as interns

JJ McDonnell

- Fillets fish and prepares them for distribution

McCormick's Flavor for Life

- Teaches cooking skills to make healthy, flavorful meals

Maryland Food Bank

- Distributes fish fillets to those in need

United Way of Central Maryland

- Developed this partnership as part of efforts to strengthen families and communities



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Interns worked with Dr. Keiko Saito in the Aquaculture Research Center. They tested fish raised in net-pen aquaculture and fish raised at IMET using commercial and an IMET-developed feed. Fish grown at IMET had very low levels of mercury and arsenic.

Samples	Mercury (ppm)	Arsenic (ppm)
Net-pen	0.073±0.007	0.627±0.488
IMET with commercial feed	0.015±0.023	0.353±0.279
IMET with IMET feed	Not detected	Not detected

IMET researchers and interns harvested fish and sent them to JJ McDonnell for processing. Each year, as scientists refined their processes, they harvested increasing amounts of fish. In all, 11,900 fish (over 13,000 pounds) were raised through this partnership.



Harvest (yr)	#Fish	Total Harvest (lb)
2018	3,700	3,800
2019	4,000	4,250
2021	4,200	5,000

Fish were distributed to those in need, both at free meal sites and pantry-on-the-go events. In all, the project produced 23,600 fish fillets.



Health is the overarching goal of the FISH project: IMET protects a healthy environment by developing sustainable aquaculture practices; JJ McDonnell makes it easy for people to prepare a healthy entree by filleting fish; United Way helps ensure access to high quality food for those in need; and McCormick's Flavor for Life program helps individuals create healthy (and tasty!) meals in their kitchens.

