



The Maine Seaweed Exchange is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Company
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Announcing the MSE Kelp Collaborative!

The Kelp Collaborative is a Maine Seaweed Exchange Program designed to encourage the development of an organic network of seaweed farmers and processors to scale the industry with a sustainable community-based model. By providing training, support, and market opportunities to seaweed farmers and processors, we seek to develop a high quality, high-value seaweed aquaculture industry based on shared values, collaboration, and passion for our work.

Program Highlights:

- The Kelp Collaborative is focused on creating a network of organically certified seaweed farms, drying facilities and processors to scale the industry in a community-based, collaborative way.
- The Kelp Collaborative is open to new or existing seaweed farmers and anyone with an interest in drying or processing seaweed for additional income. MSE will assist farmers, dryers, and processors with required certifications, training, and facilitation services.
- Kelp Collaborative members run their own independent businesses but work together as a larger industry. Members may list offers to buy, sell, distribute, or process farmed seaweed, or offer seaweed related services. Organic certification, shared standards, and shared infrastructure will allow members to work together to grow, dry, process, and sell high quality, high-value seaweeds.

Current Sample Offerings¹:

- Kelp Collaborative seaweed farmers can earn \$1 per pound of wet seaweed.
- Kelp Collaborative processing members can earn \$5 per pound dry weight to dry seaweed-- seaweed is provided wet from another member's farm and the member just has to dry it!
- Integrated farm and drying facilities can earn \$15 per pound for dry seaweed-- the member grows and dries the seaweed.

Why this Program is Necessary:

- Farmed seaweed has been attracting attention and funding, yet little to no funding is available for processing training and capacity.
- Farmers are growing seaweed to only find there is little to no market to sell their crops. Many farmers stop growing after one or two years or enter into supply agreements that are below market value.
- If farmed seaweed is to become a significant economic driver in our communities, processing capacity must be developed. The Kelp Collaborative's goal is to address this significant obstacle to industry growth by developing capacity in our own backyards. MSE can help interested participants build, certify, and operate their own seaweed drying houses and processing facilities.

Key Benefits:

- The Kelp Collaborative provides the training and support necessary to start or grow a farmed seaweed industry business with a focus on farming and processing.
- The Kelp Collaborative provides a forum and industry support structure to grow and develop seaweed aquaculture as a viable industry.

Contact the MSE for more information. Email: info@seaweedexchange.com. Tel.: 207-387-0445.

¹ Subject to Kelp Collaborative membership and terms and conditions. All offerings based on organically certified *alaria esculenta* products, and facilities.