



September 4, 2024

Ms. Genette Harris
Office of Agriculture and Forestry Development
Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
102 Governor Street, Richmond, VA 23219

RE: Amory Seafood's Enhancement of Value-add Catfish Processing & Freezing Grant Application

Dear Ms. Harris,

The City of Hampton, Virginia is a historic coastal community founded in 1610, with a long heritage and intimate relationship with the seafood industry. We are pleased to submit the attached grant application to the Virginia Department of Agriculture on behalf of Amory Seafood for the **Enhancement of Value-add Catfish Processing & Freezing** project.

Amory Seafood is a 4th generation Hampton seafood company that has been in operation for over 100 years harvesting, processing, shipping, and distributing seafood along the East Coast and North-Central portions of the United States. On an annual basis, Amory Seafood works with an average of 20 local watermen who also support this application. The company's thorough understanding of the seafood industry, established relationships with local watermen, and existing customer base across multiple states provide a solid foundation for expansion.

Amory Seafood has processed Blue Catfish for over 10 years, and the company purchases fish from numerous watermen, and seafood harvesters. Amory Seafood has been limited in its processing capabilities due to limited freezing capacity. Increasing the company's capacity to process invasive Blue Catfish will directly support efforts to protect native Chesapeake Bay species and aligns with broader environmental conservation goals for the region.

The implementation of Amory Seafood's **Enhancement of Value-add Catfish Processing & Freezing** project promises substantial economic benefits for Hampton and the surrounding Chesapeake Bay region. At the forefront is job creation, with 8-10 new full-time positions anticipated at the processing facility. The grant will enable an increase in processing capacity, and an immediate increase in Blue Catfish purchases from local watermen, injecting an estimated additional \$1.5 million annually directly into the local fishing community. In addition, there will be increased business for local ice suppliers, packaging materials, and transportation services.

The City of Hampton proudly supports Amory Seafood's grant application based on the company's long history and thorough understanding of the seafood industry; established relationships with local watermen; existing customer base across multiple states; the positive economic impact in the city and Chesapeake Bay region; and the positive environmental impacts.

Sincerely,



Mary B. Bunting
City Manager

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
22 Lincoln Street | Hampton, Virginia 23669
P: (757) 727-6392 | F: (757) 728-3037

**Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund –
 Infrastructure Grant Program
 (AFID Infrastructure Program)
 Grant Application**

I. Overview

Project Title: Enhancement of Value-add Catfish Processing & Freezing	
Applicant Jurisdiction: City of Hampton VA	Other localities (for multijurisdictional applications only):
Project Start Date: March 2025	Anticipated End Date: March 2025
Requested Amount: \$247,038	
Primary Contact Information	
Name: Leonard Sledge	
Title: Director	
Organization: City of Hampton Department of Economic Development	
Telephone: 757-727-6237	
Email Address: lsledge@hampton.gov	
Mailing Address: 1 Franklin Street, Suite 600	
City, State, Zip: Hampton VA 23669	

II. Project Description

Amory Seafood, a cornerstone of Virginia's seafood industry for over a century, is seeking support through the AFID Blue Catfish Program to enhance our processing capabilities. Our project, "Enhancement of Value-add Catfish Processing & Freezing," aims to revolutionize our Blue Catfish processing operations in Hampton, VA. As a fourth-generation family-owned business, we have witnessed firsthand the changes in our local waterways and the seafood industry. This project represents not just an upgrade to our facilities, but a strategic investment in the future of our region's aquatic ecosystem and economy. We are requesting \$250,000 in grant funding to implement modern Individually Quick Freeze (IQF) technology, which will dramatically increase our processing capacity and open new markets for our products. This two-year project, slated to begin in March 2025, will position us at the forefront of sustainable seafood processing in the Chesapeake Bay region.

The project purpose

Amory Seafood, a 4th generation seafood company with over 100 years of operation in Virginia's historic seafood industry, proposes to enhance our Blue Catfish processing capabilities. By upgrading our freezing capabilities with an IQF system, we will significantly increase our capacity to process Blue Catfish, supporting both environmental sustainability efforts and local economic growth.

The specific issue(s) that the project will address:

The Chesapeake Bay, once teeming with native species like croaker, spot, and trout, has seen a dramatic shift in its ecosystem over the past few decades. The invasive Blue Catfish, introduced in the 1970s, has become a dominant predator, threatening the balance of our waterways. At the same time, this invasive species presents a unique economic opportunity for our region's seafood industry.

Our project aims to address several interconnected challenges:

1. The ecological threat posed by the invasive Blue Catfish to native Chesapeake Bay species.
2. The economic challenges faced by local watermen as traditional fish populations decline.
3. The limitations of our current processing capabilities, which restrict our ability to fully capitalize on the Blue Catfish market.
4. The untapped potential of the domestic/global frozen catfish fillet market, valued at over \$1.52 billion USD globally.

By investing in IQF technology, we will not only increase our processing capacity but also improve the quality and marketability of our products. This upgrade will allow us to meet the growing demand for individually frozen fillets, a product format that makes up 80% of the frozen catfish market.

Our project aligns perfectly with the goals of the AFID Blue Catfish Program, as it supports local food production, enhances environmental sustainability, and promises broad community benefits. It represents a strategic response to changing ecological and market conditions, turning an environmental challenge into an economic opportunity.

Amory Seafood is a 4th generation seafood company harvesting, processing, shipping, and distributing seafood across the East Coast and North-Central US. We have been in operation for over 100 years and

are in Virginia's historic seafood industry in Hampton VA. Blue Catfish has provided a unique new seafood sector opportunity for us. This is of particular importance, as catfish is in the top 10 most consumed seafood products in the US. As other fishery sectors struggle, this fishery, and fishery biomass continues to grow in Virginia. The Blue Catfish's population growth has come at the peril of traditional native species as a food source. These traditional native species, such as Croaker, Spot, Trout, Mullet, Shad etc. have consequently declined to unsustainable levels. Meanwhile the Blue Catfish have potential for 52 week a year harvesting and processing. We at Amory Seafood have been processing Blue Catfish at our facilities in Hampton, VA for over 10 years. In addition to adding value to our product lines, and market potential, this fishery is also critical to the livelihood of the many local fishermen that provide us product for seafood processing/distribution. To date we have been able to sell Blue Catfish to (VA, NC, SC, GA, FLA, MD, DEL, NJ, NY, PA, OH, IL, IN.), ranging from small outlets to larger wholesale and retail. One of our biggest challenges in scaling up our Blue Catfish sales has been our inability to Individually Quick Freeze (IQF) filets.

Our production has primarily been fresh but with the large volume and the market for Individually Quick-Frozen filets we must upgrade our current facilities to be able to purchase and process more Blue Catfish. The USDA has offered contracts to purchase wild caught Blue Catfish IQF filets, and we continually get requests from many other customers that prefer the convenience of IQF filets. These opportunities are critical for us in order to be able to expand our harvesting, processing, and marketing of Blue Catfish, as well prevent the further decline of traditional native species.

On an annual basis, Amory Seafood works with an average of 20 local watermen. Attached are letters that reference our commitment and cooperation with these watermen.

Over the last ten years, Amory Seafood has invested over \$200,000 dollars in the form of a dedicated processing room, accommodations for USDA seafood inspectors and overall training. With the help of this grant, we can further evolve into a processing facility that encourages maximum processing output.

Local and Regional Benefits

The implementation of this project will yield numerous benefits for our local community and the broader Chesapeake Bay region:

- 1. Support for local watermen:** The increased processing capacity will allow us to purchase significantly more Blue Catfish from local small-scale watermen. This will provide them with a more stable and lucrative market for their catch, helping to offset the decline in traditional fish species. We anticipate being able to increase our purchases from local watermen by at least 100%, directly supporting the livelihoods of dozens of fishing families in our area.
- 2. Job creation and economic growth:** The expansion of our operations will necessitate the creation of new jobs in the seafood processing sector. We expect to add at least 8-10 new positions over the course of the project, ranging from processing line workers to quality control specialists and logistics coordinators. These jobs will provide stable employment opportunities in the Hampton region that has been challenged by economic transitions.

3. **Environmental sustainability:** By increasing our capacity to process Blue Catfish, we're directly contributing to efforts to control this invasive species. The reduction in Blue Catfish population will help protect native Chesapeake Bay species, contributing to the overall health and biodiversity of the ecosystem. This aligns with broader conservation efforts in the region and demonstrates how economic activity can support environmental goals.
4. **Strengthening the local food system:** The increased production of Blue Catfish fillets will enhance food security in our region by providing a locally-sourced, sustainable protein option. This reduces reliance on imported seafood and shortens supply chains, contributing to a more resilient local food system.
5. **Economic diversification:** By expanding into the IQF market, we're opening up new revenue streams for our business and the region as a whole. This diversification will help buffer our local economy against fluctuations in traditional seafood markets and create new opportunities for growth and innovation in the sector.

Project Goals and Objectives

Our project has several specific, measurable goals that align with the AFID Blue Catfish Program's objectives. These goals are ambitious but achievable. They reflect our commitment to growing our business in a way that benefits our local community, supports environmental sustainability, and contributes to the long-term health of the Chesapeake Bay seafood industry.

1. **Install a new Individually Quick Freeze (IQF) processing system:** This is the cornerstone of our project. The new system will allow us to flash-freeze individual catfish fillets, preserving their quality and extending their shelf life. This technology is crucial for entering new markets and meeting consumer demand for convenience products.
2. **Increase Blue Catfish processing capacity by at least 200%:** With the new IQF system and associated equipment, we aim to more than double our current processing capacity. This will allow us to handle larger volumes of fish, supporting both our business growth and efforts to control the invasive Blue Catfish population.
3. **Enter the domestic IQF catfish fillet market:** Currently, we're limited to selling fresh and block-frozen fillets. The IQF system will allow us to produce individually frozen fillets, opening up access to a market segment that makes up 80% of the frozen catfish market. This represents a significant opportunity for business growth and market expansion.
4. **Increase purchases from local watermen by at least 100%:** As our processing capacity grows, so too will our need for raw material. We're committed to sourcing this increased supply from local watermen, providing them with expanded economic opportunities.
5. **Achieve a 200% increase in Blue Catfish fillet sales within the first year of operation:** With access to new markets and increased production capacity, we project a significant boost in sales. This growth will drive economic benefits throughout our supply chain.
6. **Support the reduction of invasive Blue Catfish population in local waterways:** While primarily a business initiative, our project has important ecological implications. By increasing the commercial harvest of Blue Catfish, we're contributing to efforts to control this invasive species and protect native aquatic life.

7. **Maintain and potentially increase employment in the local seafood processing sector:** As our operations expand, we anticipate creating new job opportunities. We're committed to hiring locally, supporting employment in our community

Project Deliverables

To ensure the success of our project and provide tangible measures of progress, we've identified the following key deliverables:

1. **Installation and operation of a new IQF processing system:** This is the primary physical deliverable of our project. We will procure and install a state-of-the-art IQF system, capable of flash-freezing individual catfish fillets. This system will be fully operational and integrated into our existing processing line by the end of the project period.
2. **Purchase and implementation of 210 fillet trays and 10 racks for freezing fillets:** These additional pieces of equipment are crucial for maximizing the efficiency of our new IQF system. They will allow us to handle larger volumes of fish and ensure consistent quality in our frozen products.
3. **Installation of new packaging equipment:** This includes a constant bag sealer and a tape sealer with label printer. These machines will enable us to package our IQF fillets efficiently and professionally, meeting the standards required by major retailers and foodservice operators.
4. **Completion of staff training on new equipment and processes:** We will develop and implement a comprehensive training program for our existing staff and new hires. This will ensure that all team members are proficient in operating the new equipment and following updated food safety and quality control procedures.
5. **Production of first batch of IQF Blue Catfish fillets:** This milestone will mark the full implementation of our new processing capabilities. We will document this process and use the first batch for quality testing and initial market outreach.
6. **Quarterly reports on increased processing capacity, sales, and purchases from local watermen:** Throughout the project period, we will produce regular reports detailing our progress. These reports will include data on our processing volumes, sales figures, and the amount of fish purchased from local watermen. This will allow us to track our progress towards our goals and make any necessary adjustments.
7. **Final report detailing project outcomes, including economic and environmental impacts:** At the conclusion of the project period, we will produce a comprehensive report summarizing the project's outcomes. This will include detailed information on job creation, economic impact, contribution to invasive species control efforts, and lessons learned throughout the project.

Environmental Sustainability

By increasing our capacity to process invasive Blue Catfish, our project directly supports efforts to protect native Chesapeake Bay species. This aligns with broader environmental conservation goals for the region. Over the past 15 years, we've seen purchases of traditional Chesapeake Bay species drop by over 90%, while Blue Catfish purchases have grown from zero to over 900,000 lbs annually.

Support from Watermen and Seafood Communities

Our proposal is strongly supported by local watermen, as evidenced by the attached support letters.

Demonstration of Likelihood of Success

Amory Seafood's century-long presence in Virginia's seafood industry, coupled with our decade of experience in Blue Catfish processing, positions us uniquely for success in this venture. Our deep understanding of the market, established relationships with local watermen, and existing customer base across multiple states provide a solid foundation for expansion. The demonstrated market demand for frozen catfish fillets, valued at over \$400 million USD domestically, assures a ready market for our increased production.

Our likelihood of success is further bolstered by our careful planning and strategic partnerships. We've engaged reputable equipment suppliers like General Refrigeration for the IQF system installation, and we're collaborating with VSAREC for food safety training. Our phased implementation plan allows for careful monitoring and adjustment at each stage, minimizing risk. Moreover, our financial stability and willingness to match grant funding demonstrate our commitment and ability to see this project through to successful completion.

The broad support from local watermen, evidenced by their letters, indicates a community-wide commitment to the project's success. This support ensures a steady supply of fish and community backing. Combined with our track record of regulatory compliance and our scalable approach, which allows for future expansion, we are confident in our ability to not only meet but potentially exceed the project's goals, delivering significant economic and environmental benefits to our region.

Expected positive economic impact of the project on affected localities,

The implementation of our Blue Catfish Processing Enhancement project promises substantial economic benefits for Hampton, VA, and the surrounding Chesapeake Bay region. At the forefront is job creation, with 8-10 new full-time positions anticipated at our processing facility, complementing the security it provides to our existing 30 employees. More significantly, by doubling our Blue Catfish processing capacity, we project an increase of at least 100% in purchases from local watermen, injecting an estimated additional \$1.5 million annually directly into the local fishing community. This increased demand provides a crucial lifeline to fishing families challenged by declining populations of traditional fish species.

The economic ripple effects extend beyond direct employment and fish purchases. We anticipate increased business for local suppliers of ice, packaging materials, and transportation services, conservatively estimated at an additional \$200,000 in annual local spending. Furthermore, our expansion into the IQF catfish market contributes to economic diversification, enhancing the region's economic resilience.

In total, we conservatively estimate that this project will generate over \$3 million in direct annual economic impact for the locality, with potential for significantly more when considering indirect and induced effects. This investment not only strengthens the local seafood industry but also creates opportunities for workforce development through partnerships with local educational institutions. By turning an environmental challenge into an economic opportunity, this project plays a crucial role in sustaining and growing our coastal economy, benefiting a wide range of stakeholders in our community.

III. Eligibility

Amory Seafood is a 4th generation seafood company harvesting, processing, shipping, and distributing seafood across the East Coast and North-Central US. We have been in operation for over 100 years, and are in Virginia's historic seafood industry in Hampton VA. We have been processing Blue Catfish for over 10 years, and purchase these fish from numerous watermen, and seafood harvesters. We are limited by our freezing capability. If we had the enhanced capacity to quick-freeze Blue Catfish fillets, we would quickly be able to enter this extremely large domestic frozen catfish fillet market currently valued at more than \$400 million USD.

ELIGIBILITY PRIORITIES

- 1) **Projects that create processing, flash freezing, and infrastructure capacity in proximity to small-scale blue catfish watermen.** With this grant we will leverage our previous Blue Catfish Processing investments with the procurement of a new Individually Quick Freeze (IQF) processing system; thereby allowing us to increase Blue Catfish harvesting, processing, and marketing into the much larger and more lucrative IQF catfish fillet markets. Our facility is located in the epicenter of Virginia's historic seafood industry, and we purchase a majority of our blue catfish from local small-scale blue catfish watermen.
- 1) **Processing facilities that are primarily locally owned, including packaging, freezing, and labeling facilities that are used for processing blue catfish.** Amory Seafood is a 4th generation locally owned seafood company harvesting, processing, shipping, and distributing seafood.
- 2) **Projects that involve or incorporate existing seafood processors and businesses.** Amory Seafood is a 4th generation locally owned seafood company harvesting, processing, shipping, and distributing seafood.
- 3) **We are in the Hampton Urban Enterprise Zone #8.**

IV. Match Requirement

Please indicate if your project qualifies for a reduced match requirement as described in the Program Guidelines:

A. Is the project located in an economically-distressed locality Yes: X No: <input type="checkbox"/> (located in an economic enterprise zone)
B. Is the project a shared-use facility serving multiple small-scale agricultural producers? Yes: X No: We service multiple fisherman from the tidewater region

V. Budget and Budget Narrative

To accommodate IQF processing, we need to upgrade and modernize our current refrigeration system. This will allow us to flash freeze individual filets, which will double the size of our market. We are currently selling fresh filets and block frozen filets. The IQF (Individually Quick Frozen) filets make up 80% of the frozen filet market.

Along with the modernization and upgrades to support IQF processing we also need freezing trays, racks, tables, scales, sealers and miscellaneous packaging equipment and supplies for the

freezing process. Certain customers and contracts require heat-sealed tamperproof bags. This will require the proper equipment for packaging. A Constant heat sealer will also need to be purchased.

VI Work Plan

Project Activity	Who	Timeline (Month/Year)	Cost
Purchase and install the cooling tower/evaporator unit	General Refrigeration	3 – 4-month lead time with 1 week install	\$197,088
Purchase filet trays and racks for freezing filets	Ultra Source	Delivered in 2 weeks	\$24,000
Packaging Equipment Constant bag Sealer Tape sealer with label printer Scales & Stainless Tables	Sorbent Systems SSI packaging	Delivered in 2 weeks 1 month lead time	\$10,000 \$550 \$8,400 \$4000
Set up training and operations	VSAREC (food safety)	Following upgrades to refrigeration	~\$3,000

Overall, we estimate the expenditures to be ~\$247,038. This puts this project within the threshold of the grant request.

VII. Metrics and Outcomes

With the installation of this new freezing unit, we will be able to capture the exponentially larger domestic market for frozen catfish filets; estimated to be more than \$400 million USD. Our current Blue Catfish filet sales are around \$400,000/year for fresh product. With this new freezing capacity, we anticipate at least a 200% increase in sales, further enhancing our purchasing capacity from watermen. As we continue concurrent work to enhance the potential for automated blue catfish processing at our facility (together with the Virginia Seafood AREC), our sales of Blue Catfish could be increased by many orders of magnitude. The markets and fish are there, both domestic and international, the ability to process and freeze high quality filets presents a major seafood expansion opportunity for the Virginia Seafood industry, and our company.

It is also vitally important to reduce the numbers of Blue Catfish which are having a detrimental effect on the traditional fish populations. Over the past 15 years we have seen our normal Chesapeake Bay species purchases drop by over 90%. With the decimation of native species, our annual Blue Catfish purchases and packaging have increased from zero to over 900,000 pounds over the last ten years.

VII. Letters of Support / Attachments

**AFID INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT
PROJECT BUDGET FORM**

Locality Name	City of Hampton, Virginia	
Project Title	Enhancement of Value-added Blue Catfish Processing, Flash Freezing infrastructure Grant	
Requested Award	\$247,038	
INCOME SOURCES	AMOUNT	COMMENTS
APPLICANT MATCH		
Local Cash Match	N/A	
Local In-Kind Match	N/A	
Subtotal Applicant Match Income	\$ -	
OTHER MATCH		
Foundation/Non-profit	\$ -	
Cash	\$ -	
In-kind	\$ -	
Federal	\$ -	
Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission	\$ -	
Other	\$ -	
Subtotal Other Match Income	\$ -	
TOTAL INCOME	\$ -	

EXPENSES	TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	AFID REQUEST	CASH MATCH	IN-KIND MATCH	OTHER MATCH
Personnel					
Fringe					
Travel					
Construction and/or Renovation	\$ -				
Supplies/Materials (Purchase & Install Cooling Tower & Evaporator Equipment)	\$244,038	\$244,038	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Contractual					
Other (Setup & Training)	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000			
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 247,038	\$ 247,038	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

BUDGET CATEGORIES

Personnel: Costs for staff that are employees of the locality

Fringe: Costs for FICA and other payroll taxes, health and life insurance for employees

Construction and/or Renovation: Construction and construction related materials.

Travel: Mileage and per diems

Supplies/Materials: Special purpose equipment and supporting materials

Contractual: Costs for project-relevant services, consultants creating feasibility studies, strategic plans, etc.

Other: Any items not covered in the above categories.



VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
VIRGINIA SEAFOOD AGRICULTURAL
RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER
VIRGINIA TECH.

Virginia Seafood AREC

15 Rudd Lane
Hampton, VA 23669
P: (757) 727-4861
mschwarz@vt.edu

August 22nd, 2024

Subject: Letter of Support for the Blue Catfish Processing, Flash Freezing, and Infrastructure Grant Program.

Dear Meade Amory:

The Virginia Seafood Agricultural Research and Extension Center (VSAREC) is pleased to provide a letter of support for your proposal for the Blue Catfish Processing, Flash Freezing, and Infrastructure Grant Program. We are confident that this proposal will positively help Virginia's blue catfish fishermen and seafood industry through your stated goals.

The VSAREC is part of Virginia Tech and has the mission of supporting the seafood industry in Virginia. We acknowledge that blue catfish is an invasive species affecting other Chesapeake Bay species. There is an enormous need to create value-added products for blue catfish. Amory, one of the main blue catfish processors in Hampton and the Commonwealth of Virginia, can process thousands of pounds. In 2023-2024, Amory's bought 900,000 lbs., processed 600,000 lbs., and sold 200,000 lbs. of fresh catfish fillets. Due to the limited capacity for rapid freezing, Amory has been unable to process more quantities, limiting the purchase of blue catfish to local fishermen. This has caused many fishermen to sell their blue catfish catch to other states, such as Maryland and North Carolina. The proposal from Amory to obtain a flash-freezing unit will help them process more catfish, create a high-quality value-added product, and support the VA's economy by buying more catch from local fishermen.

The Virginia Seafood AREC believes that this grant will be of great value to the fishermen and seafood industry, and we stand ready to support Amory Seafood throughout the duration of this implementation and subsequent operation/optimization.

Sincerely,

Michael H. Schwarz, Ph.D.
Virginia Seafood AREC; Director
Hampton, Virginia, 23669
Office: 757-727-4861
Email: mschwarz@vt.edu

August 26, 2024

Cornelius Drew
Doc's Seafood LLC
370 Milltown Lane
Dendron VA 23839

As a fisherman, it is my job to observe the changes in the ecosystem as well as the trends in the market. Seeing the decrease in native fishes has been alarming, and it is essential to adjust my fishing practices to better suit the current shift. The local industry has to accommodate these changes, and that is why I am asking that you provide Amory Seafood with the grant funding they need to help modernize their processing facilities.

Thank you,


Cornelius Drew

August 26, 2024

David Johnson & Chris Stowell
Fox Hill Fish Co.,
617 Beach Road
Hampton, VA 23664

We are full-time fishermen who have traditionally caught spot, croaker, trout, shad, mullet, rockfish and other native Chesapeake Bay species. Many of these species are in historically low abundance, which has led us to primarily fish for catfish. We are limited on our landings of catfish by an inconsistent market. We ask that you award Amory the Grant application to upgrade their catfish production and freeze filets to better secure a consistent market for our fish.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Johnson".

David Johnson

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris Stowell".

Chris Stowell

August 26, 2024

Chandler Rosso
190 Beach Road
Hampton, VA 23664

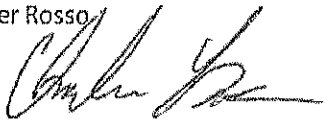
This letter is in support of Amory Seafood's application for grant money to increase their processing facility capabilities. Ideally, native fish would be my main source of income, but due to the invasive nature of catfish introduced to the local waterways and their food intake and predation, my focus has had to shift.

Catfish are becoming my primary species, and I cannot continue to fish without a strong market.

Please assist Amory with grant funding to allow them to better follow the current trends.

Thank you,

Chandler Rosso

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chandler Rosso", written over a horizontal line.

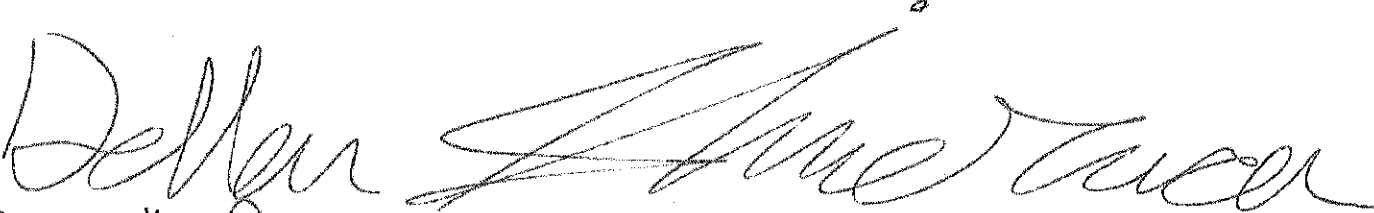
August 26, 2024

Deven Simmerman
202 S Willard Ave
Hampton VA 23663-1832

As a local fisherman, I am reliant on the current market capacity. Due to processing restrictions, Amory Seafood is unable to accept the current supply. It is in the best interest of me and other fisherman that they are able to increase their overall capacity. The prospect of better pricing and movement is exciting; I ask that you please consider Amory's grant request.

Sincerely,

Deven Simmerman


David P Carter II
C.A. Hendon

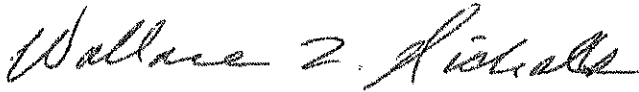
Wallace L. Nichols

August 26, 2024

2404 Randolph St.

Suffolk, VA 23434

I would ask that you please consider Amory Seafood's grant for catfish Processing.
Amory buys catfish from us year-round and upgrading their processing will help us get better prices.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wallace L. Nichols". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the word "Sincerely,".

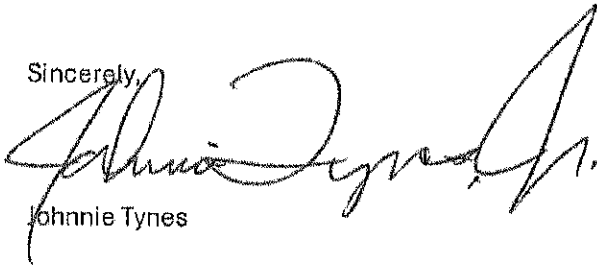
Sincerely,

August 26, 2024

Johnnie Tynes, Jr.
70 Flowerdew Lane
Surry, VA 23883

I would ask that you please consider Amory Seafood's grant for catfish Processing.
Amory buys catfish from us year-round and upgrading their processing will help us get better prices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Johnnie Tynes, Jr.", written in black ink. The signature is fluid and somewhat stylized, with a large initial "J".

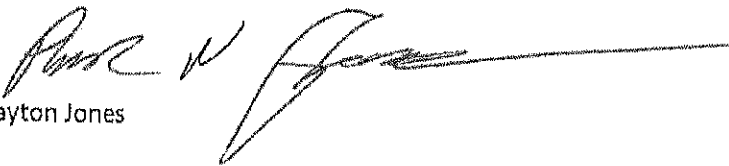
Johnnie Tynes

August 26, 2024

Payton Jones
14246 Tylers Beach Rd
Smithfield, VA 23430

This letter is in support of Amory Seafood's application for grant money to increase their processing facility capabilities.
Catfish are becoming my primary species, and I cannot continue to fish without a strong market.

Thank you,


Payton Jones

August 26, 2024

Dennis Cox & Dylan Cox
101 S King St
Hampton, VA 23669

I am a full-time fisherman with two full time watermen that work with me. This is a two-generation family operation. We used to catch mostly mullet, spot, croakers, perch, striped bass, etc. The native species we have fished for have disappeared and sometimes we cannot fish for catfish because we do not have a market. Catfish prices have fluctuated month to month, and it is important we find a more consistent market. This will ensure that future generations can continue in this profession.

Amory has been our primary buyer for years and they need the capability to freeze fish to find more markets so we can fish for catfish consistently.

Please consider Amory's request for a grant to upgrade the processing.

Thank you,

Dennis Cox



Dylan Cox

