



NATIONAL
Aquaculture
ASSOCIATION

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2025 FARM BILL PRIORITIES

THE UNITED VOICE FOR U.S. AQUACULTURE

Pictured: Mt. Lassen Trout Farm, California

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ONE COMMUNITY, ONE VOICE

For over 34 years, the National Aquaculture Association (NAA) has been the unifying voice for the United States' aquaculture community. NAA is committed to the growth and success of all American aquaculture farms through collaborations with state and federal governments to foster a positive business climate and cost-effective regulations ensuring sustainable, environmental stewardship. As a not-for-profit trade association, we fulfill our mission through advocacy, public outreach and farm promotion.

Sebastian Belle
President



FOREWARD

The U.S. aquaculture community requests the following provisions be included in the Farm Bill. The premise for our requests rest upon the fact that the United States consumed a total of 6.82 billion pounds of edible seafood and imports accounted for 5.65 billion pounds of that total, or 82.83%, contributing to a seafood trade deficit of \$24 billion.[1] The heavy reliance on imports of protein critical to people's health[2] not only creates a massive trade imbalance; it also creates food security[3] and food safety issues[4] for our country.

The U.S. has the farm capacity, inland and coastal aquatic resources, and fish feed production to become a major producer and strengthen domestic food security. U.S. aquaculture farmers work within a very complex and effective federal and state legal, regulatory, and science-driven environment to anticipate and mitigate potential impacts; however, applied research, disaster assistance, insurance are needed to improve farm productivity, reduce production costs, increase market value and manage risks.

[1] Fisheries of the United States, 2022

[2] Scientific Report of the 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee

[3] Threats to Food and Agriculture Resources

[4] Imported Seafood Safety: FDA Should Improve Monitoring of Its Warning Letter Process and Better Assess Its Effectiveness | U.S. GAO; Food Safety: FDA's Imported Seafood Safety Program Shows Some Progress, but Further Improvements Are Needed | U.S. GAO; Imported Seafood Safety: Actions Needed to Improve FDA Oversight of Import Alert Removal Decisions | U.S. GAO; Imported Seafood Safety: FDA and USDA Could Strengthen Efforts to Prevent Unsafe Drug Residues | U.S. GAO; Seafood Safety: FDA Needs to Improve Oversight of Imported Seafood and Better Leverage Limited Resources | U.S. GAO



Pictured: Keo Fish Farm, Arkansas

APPLIED AQUACULTURE RESEARCH PROGRAMS

Five Regional Aquaculture Centers (Northeast, South, Midwest, West and Pacific) support aquaculture Extension and fund applied research identified and guided by the respective regional farming communities to solve critical production, marketing and regulatory challenges. Both the initial authorization of \$7.5 million, reduced to \$5 M in 2013, and level funding of \$5 M since 2018 must be increased to offset inflation, fund additional applied research and Extension projects directly benefiting America's aquaculture farmers, and allow each Center flexibility to hire Extension and communications personnel as deemed of importance to commercial aquaculture in each region.

The Centers work on valuable species: catfish, trout, salmon, hybrid striped bass, sturgeon, redfish, tilapia, oysters, clams, mussels, shrimp, baitfish, seaweed and ornamental fish/aquatic plants. Projects have advanced the science of production and systems, health management, genetics, nutrition, marketing and socioeconomics. Aquaculture R&D is almost entirely supported by state and federal funding. A 2017 analysis reported a 37-fold return on federal investments in aquaculture research since 2000.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1477(a) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3324(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “and” at the end;

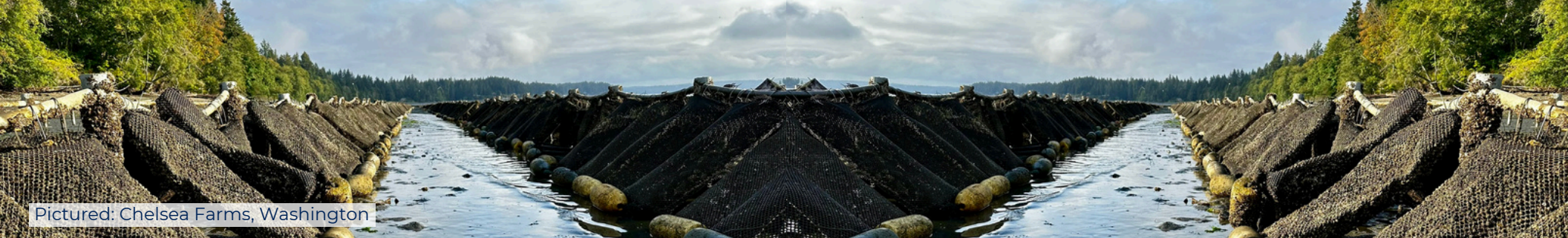
(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “2023.” and inserting “2024; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following: “(3) \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2029.”.

(b) INDIRECT COSTS.—Section 1477 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3324) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) INDIRECT COSTS.—Effective beginning on the date of enactment of this subsection—

“(1) the limitation with respect to indirect costs under section 1462 shall apply with respect to awards made under this subtitle; and “(2) the limitation with respect to indirect costs under section 1473 shall not apply with respect to those awards.”



Pictured: Chelsea Farms, Washington

WAIVE THE ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME LIMITATION

Aquaculture is a capital intense farming effort with high input costs (e.g., 50% of input costs for a fish farm are feed and fingerlings) over long growing cycles that can range from two to eight years. The current \$900,000 adjusted gross income (AGI) cap has not accounted for inflation diminishing the value of money and increases to the costs of labor, feed, equipment and maintenance.

These cost increases force farmers to raise their prices without increased farm productivity. The AGI limit severely restricts program relevance based solely on the declining value of the US dollar. The amendment restricts applicability to farmers and ranchers.

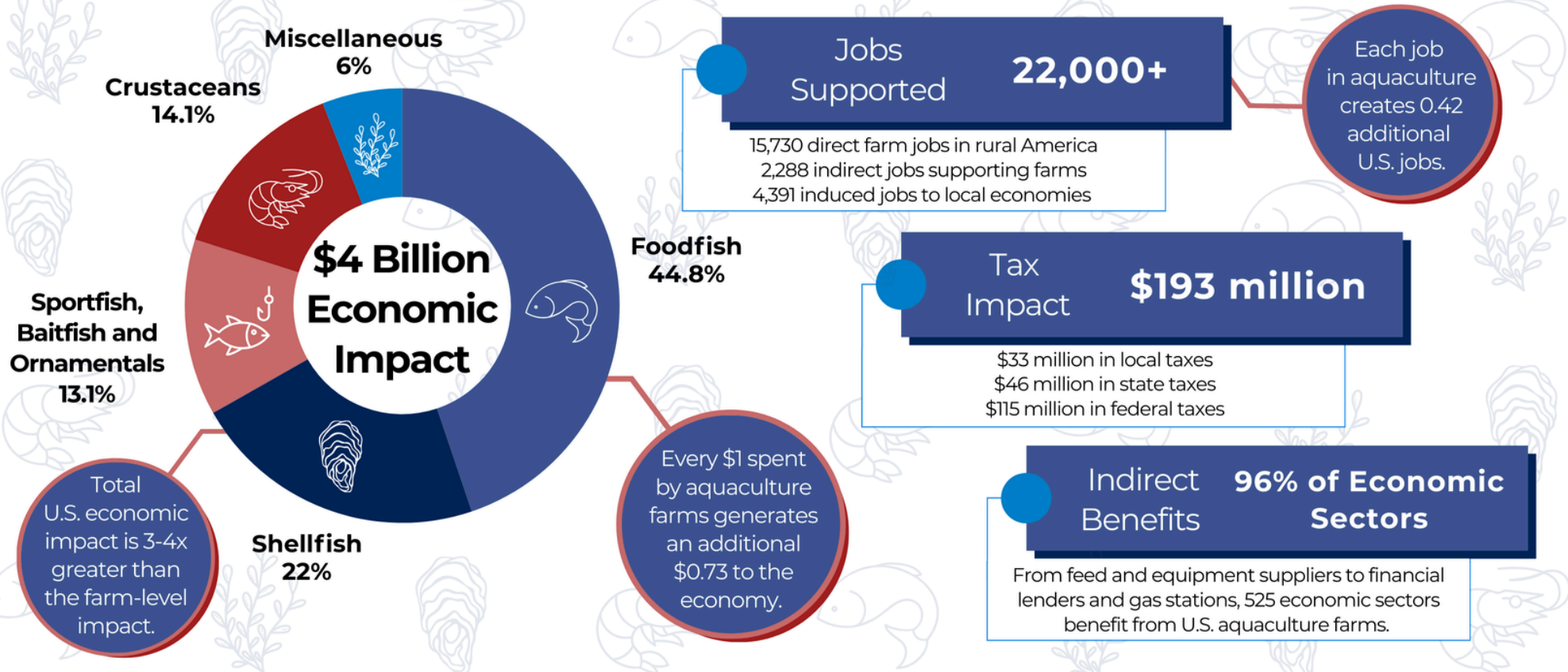
Waiving this cap will benefit all U.S. aquaculture farms through stabilizing supply chains for small farmers and giving larger farms a disaster safety net which buoys production chains following natural disasters.

Section 1001D(b) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308–3a(b)) is amended—(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “paragraph 3)” and inserting “paragraphs (3) and (4)”;

“(4) EXCEPTION.—

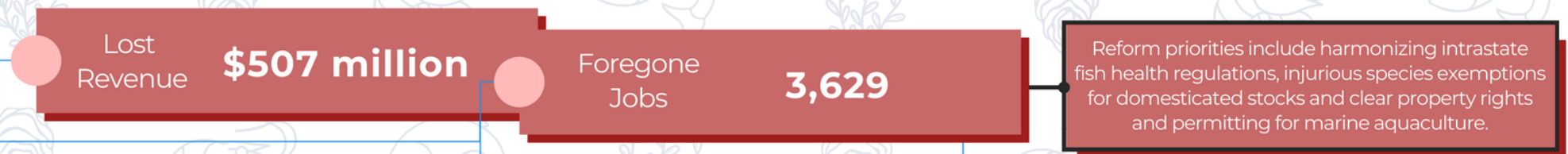
“(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an excepted payment or benefit, the limitation established by paragraph (1) shall not apply to a person or legal entity during a crop, fiscal, or program year, as appropriate, if greater than or equal to 75 percent of the average adjusted gross income of the person or legal entity derives from farming, ranching, or silviculture activities (as described in section 1001(i)).”

Economic Contribution of U.S. Aquaculture Farms



Regulations are Impeding U.S. Aquaculture Development

In the U.S., regulatory complexity and compliance costs have resulted in loss of access to markets, lost business opportunities and thwarted attempts to expand current farms or establish new farms.





Pictured: Cooke Aquaculture, Maine

AMEND THE NATIONAL AQUACULTURE ACT OF 1980

The US farming community recognizes USDA as their lead agency and benefited from the 2020 agency-to-farming community analysis; Aquaculture is Agriculture. The USDA analysis illuminated a variety of specific programs that would benefit aquaculture farmers given emphasis and authority. The National Aquaculture Association supports these three priorities.

AQUACULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The National Aquaculture Act of 1980 (16 U.S.C. 8 2801 et seq.) is amended—

“(7) a catalog of new and existing capital constraints, as described in the capital requirements plan formulated under section 8(b), that affect the development of the aquaculture industry in the United States; and

“(8) a catalog of new and existing Federal or State regulatory barriers, as described in the regulatory constraints plan formulated under section 9(b), to the initiation and operation of commercial aquaculture ventures.”;

(2) in section 5 (16 U.S.C. 2804), by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following:

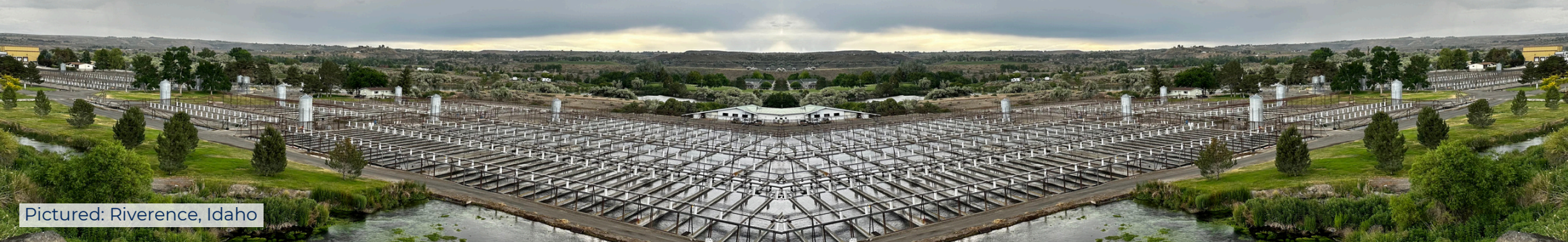
“(d) AQUACULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024, the Secretary shall establish an advisory committee, to be known as the Aquaculture Advisory Committee (referred to in this subsection as the ‘Committee’), to advise the Secretary on—

“(A) oversight of programs of the Department and other members of the coordinating group to support development of, and to advance, aquaculture best practices using the best available science, in consultation with farmers and industry partners;

“(B) providing technical assistance to aquaculture farmers and businesses, including technical assistance that pertains to shellfish, algae, and land-based aquaculture systems, using the best available science; and

“(C) any other aspects of the implementation of this Act.



Pictured: Riverence, Idaho

AMEND THE NATIONAL AQUACULTURE ACT OF 1980 (cont.)

“(e) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024, and each year thereafter, the Secretary, acting through the coordinating group and in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of the Interior, shall prepare on an annual basis, and submit to Congress, a report on the status of aquaculture in the United States. Such report shall contain—

“(1) a description and evaluation of the actions undertaken with respect to the Plan during the reporting period;

“(2) an explanation of any revisions made to the Plan during the reporting period;

“(3) the results of the continuing assessment established under section 4(e);

“(4) an evaluation of the role each Federal department or agency has in supporting the aquaculture industry;

“(5) the total amount and value of expenditures of Federal departments or agencies on—

“(A) aquaculture purchases;

“(B) aquaculture promotion and outreach supporting the aquaculture industry;

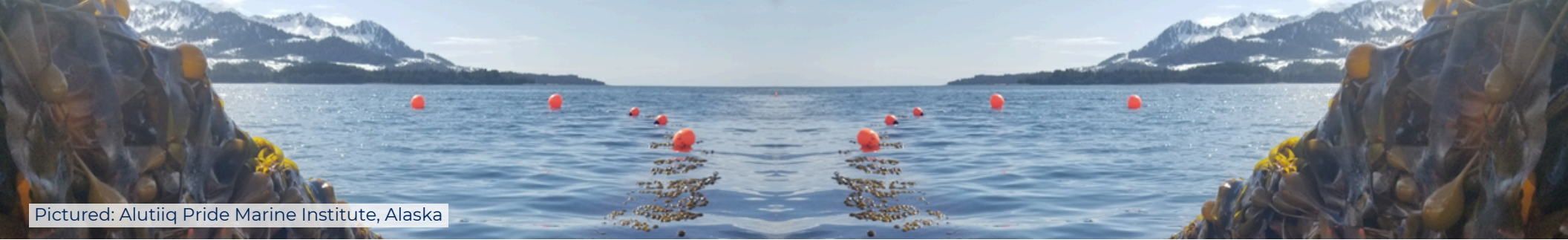
“(C) grants made to the aquaculture industry; and

“(D) grants to facilitate aquaculture research and the subject matter of such research;

“(6) a summary of the activities and recommendations of the Aquaculture Advisory Committee established under subsection (d);

“(7) a summary of the activities and recommendations of the coordinating group; and

“(8) such other comments and recommendations as the Secretary determines appropriate.”; and in section 10 (16 U.S.C. 2809), by striking “2023” each place it appears in paragraphs (1), (2), 3 and (3) and inserting “2029”.



Pictured: Alutiiq Pride Marine Institute, Alaska

CREATE AN AQUACULTURE CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

Section 1673 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5926) is amended— (1) by striking subsections (a), (b), and (c) and inserting the following:

“(a) CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall establish at least one center of excellence for the purpose of carrying out research, extension, and education activities for each of the 11 areas of focus described in paragraph (3).

“(3) AREAS OF FOCUS.—

“(A) AQUACULTURE.—A center of excellence established under this subsection may engage in research, extension, and education activities focused on developing and applying aquaculture methods, including through the propagation and rearing of economically and ecologically valuable aquatic and marine species.

ELIGIBILITY FOR SHELLFISH IN THE AGRICULTURE AND FOOD RESEARCH INITIATIVE

Subsection (b) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 3157(b)) is amended—

(B) in subparagraph (B)(i), by inserting “including methods of increasing survival rate and adaptability of shellfish” after “aquaculture”;



Pictured: Ekstrom Aquaculture, Texas

IMPROVE THE WHOLE FARM AND MICRO FARM INSURANCE PROGRAMS

“(iii) ADDITIONAL REVIEW.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act of 2024, and annually thereafter, the Corporation shall—

“(I) review any limitations on insurable revenue (including the overall limitation and limitations specific to animals, animal products, greenhouse and nursery, and aquaculture) to ensure the limitations are adequate to cover the financial risks associated with the production of high-value agricultural products; and

“(II) submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that includes a summary of the most recent review conducted under subclause

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CROPS AND CONVERAGES

“(26) AQUACULTURE PRODUCTS.—“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Corporation shall carry out research and development, or offer to enter into 1 or more contracts with 1 or more qualified persons to carry out research and development, regarding a policy to insure aquaculture products with a market.

FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN LOAN PROGRAM

(A) an eligible entity engaged in or proposing to engage in the processing of meat, poultry, processed egg products, or fish of the order Siluriformes shall comply with the requirements of the Food Safety and Inspection Service;