



**LEVY COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS      COMMISSIONERS**  
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**Matt Brooks, Chair**

November 7, 2023

Wilton Simpson  
Commissioner  
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
407 South Calhoun Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Re: Cedar Key Aquaculture Association

Honorable Commissioner Simpson,

The Levy County Board of County Commissioners is asking for your support to assist the Clam Farmers of Cedar Key whose industry was impacted after Hurricane Idalia. The Cedar Key Aquaculture Association has over 441 registered farmers and have 461 farmable leases, which in turn relates to 920 acres. They directly employ and impact over 850 people and their families. They have an untapped potential of planting 2 billion clams, which would value their industry at \$230,000,000. As of right now, their industry value is at \$45,000,000.

Due to Hurricane Idalia they have lost their salable clams at a high 80% to low 90% range. Their future crops are a 90% loss currently. Because of the lack of income, their hatchery producers will be inundated with seed that they cannot move or sell because the farmers do not have the funds to purchase the seed. The effects of Hurricane Idalia will be felt for 18 months or longer. Funding assistance is needed to return the industry back on its feet.

Thank you for taking the time to considering supporting the Cedar Key Aquaculture Association. Please do not hesitate to contact our office if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

Matt Brooks,  
Chairman

Enclosures

Cc: Senator Keith Perry, Representative Chuck Clemons