Is **MANGROVE CRAB AQUACULTURE** profitable?

Mangrove crab is considered a good product choice due to its high commercial value. The price of crablets varies according to their size. Bigger crablets sell at a higher price. Nursery is one form of product development that adds value to the smallest crabs sold to farmers.

### Technical assumptions

**Broodstock**
- Percent broodstock required: 13
- Percent of broodstock that will survive, mature and give viable zoeae: 46
- Average body weight of broodstock: 600 g
- Average zoeae produced/female: 1,200,000
- Total number of zoeae produced: 7,200,000*

**Hatchery**
- Total larval tank capacity (natural food tanks not included): 80 tons
- Stocking density of larvae: 80/liter
- Total zoeae required for stocking: 6,400,000
- Percent of zoeae that will survive to C1 C2 crablets: 2
- Number of runs/year (minimum): 7

### Costs-and-returns

**Sales of crablets**
- Quantity: 128,000
- Unit Cost (PhP): 2.50
- Value (PhP): 320,000
- Total Variable Cost: 143,918
- Total Fixed Cost: 117,294
- Net Income/run: 58,789.00
- ROI: 26.85
- Payback: 2.41

*of the 7,200,000 zoeae produced only those actively swimming are selected for stocking

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Mud Crab Hatchery, Nursery and Grow-out Operations Training Course at SEAFDEC/AQD’s Tigbauan Main Station and Dumangas Brackishwater Station.

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**Talk to us!**

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Why MANGROVE CRAB?

Mangrove crabs (Scylla spp.) or mud crabs, locally known as “alimango,” inhabit muddy and sandy bottom in brackishwater and marine environments. They dig deep burrows in mangroves and soft substrates in shallow or intertidal waters.

Widespread interest in Scylla species is increasing due to their demand both locally and internationally. Northern Mindanao, Central Luzon, Western Visayas and Bicol Region are the top producers of mangrove crabs in the Philippines.

How to culture MANGROVE CRAB?

Hatchery

Healthy mature female crabs with complete limbs are chosen as broodstock. The crabs are maintained in the tank with sand substrate until they spawn. After hatching of eggs, the zoeae (larvae) are stocked in tanks at 80-100 individuals per liter.

Nursery site selection

A brackishwater earthen pond for fish or shrimp farming can be used for mangrove crab nursery. The site must:
- Have clay or clay-loam soil to easily retain water
- Have adequate supply of clean brackishwater or seawater
- Be protected from flood and saltwater intrusion
- Be near the roads, source of crablets, traders and market
- Have electric power

Nursery

Nursery is the intermediate phase between the hatchery and grow-out phases. Crablets from the hatchery are reared to the desired size for grow-out phase. Crablets measuring 0.5-0.6 cm carapace width (CW) are grown to 1.5-2.0 cm in net cages or hapas that are installed in ponds (Phase 1). Since some farmers prefer bigger crabs, the crablets from Phase 1 nursery are harvested, sorted and further cultured until they reach 2.5-4.0 cm CW (Phase 2) in net cages or ponds with fence.

The ponds with net cages are enclosed with net fence to avoid entry of other species of crabs which may damage the net cages. To minimise cannibalism, the cages are provided with net shelters that serve as hiding place for newly-molted crabs. Feeding consists of chopped mussel meat, low value fish, snail meat, or chicken entrails at satiation or 100% of total weight of stocked crablets per day. If formulated feed is available, a combination of 25-30% formulated feed +70-75% wet feeds will be a better alternative. Stocking density is 30-50/m² in Phase 1 and 5-10/m² in Phase 2.

Crablets can be harvested after 3-4 weeks in each phase.

Packaging and transport

Crablets smaller than 2.0 cm CW are transported in oxygenated plastic bags with cool water (24°C). Crablets of more than 2.0 cm CW are transported in boxes with wet cloth or sand. Crabs are better transported early in the morning, late afternoon or during cool weather.