Can Women be Aquaculture Technicians?  

"You need to be confident, have fun, and enjoy the outdoors. I like to be outside and in nature. This is a good way to combine what I love with a career." — Erin Gutknecht

Aquaculture, probably the fastest growing food-producing sector, now accounts for nearly 50 percent of the world's food fish.

Demand has spurred the growth of aquaculture farms that raise selected aquatic species—such as shrimp, salmon, trout, and catfish—in pens or ponds. Aquaculture's presence even in landlocked states has increased as farmers attempt to diversify and cater to the growing demand for fish by consumers.

Aquaculture technicians enjoy working outside and have a love of nature, and fish. They are comfortable working in a team environment with scientists and other technicians as well as working alone. Good communication skills, attention to detail, and the ability to follow instructions are all important characteristics of an aquaculture technician. Swimming, boating, and fishing experience are also an asset as well as knowledge of underwater agriculture.

Regardless of Gender Aquaculturists need to:

- Keep records of fish numbers
- Monitor water temperature and pollution levels
- Assist in controlled hatching
- Observe fish for signs of disease and illness
- Feed by hand or machine
- Release fish into the wild
- Harvest fish from pool or upon return
- Assist in raising and harvesting underwater plants

The typical day for an aquaculture technician involves a lot of observation, maintaining equipment, and feeding. Depending on the time of year, they may also be involved in breeding, hatching, releasing, or harvesting. They consult with supervisors and farmers, and may assist researchers by keeping careful notes on water, numbers, and feeding practices. They do work outside some of the time.

National Wages
Average Salary: $35,277
Source: www.bls.gov
Idaho Hourly Range
from $9.71-$16.17

Job Outlook
Aquaculture technicians can advance to become supervisors or farmers themselves. They can also get into research, technology, and technique development, and work with conservation authorities to uncover environmentally sound ways to farm underwater.

The aquaculture industry throughout the country has been growing rapidly in the past few years, and the market for aquaculture jobs should continue to be strong. The growth stems from the recent medical studies that link health benefits to eating fish, fueling an all-time high demand. Because high-yield fish farming is a relatively new industry and is still developing, many jobs in the field are in research.

Preparation
To work as an aquaculturist, you must:

- have a high school diploma or GED;
- complete training beyond high school;
- have an eye for color and detail; and
- be able to work accurately and neatly.
- Technical and Associate of Applied Science degrees are offered at the College of Southern Idaho.

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