

## Hollywood Oyster Festival highlights Southern Maryland's Best in food and drinks

Posted by [JeroldMassie](#) On 05/13/2019

**Hollywood, MD** – Hollywood Oyster Company hosted the Hollywood Oyster and Seafood Festival at Greenwell Park last Saturday, benefitting the Greenwell Foundation while providing the savory bounties of the Chesapeake Region.

The St. Mary's County oyster farmer hosted their May 11 event, bringing together "some of the best MD breweries, wineries, and distilleries in one amazing event." On top of premium local beverages, the event boasted a variety of eats, including Oyster Tacos, Crabby Fries, and Oyster Po Boys, among many others, giving the event some additional Southern Maryland flair.

Join us at the Hollywood Oyster Festival right now at the Greenwell State Park! Enjoy live music and local seafood! [#local pic.twitter.com/bD8XAn5MkO](#)

— Maryland Seafood (@MDsBestSeafood) [May 11, 2019](#)

A picturesque day on the shore of the Patuxent River didn't cause the festival to miss a beat when light showers began to come down during the latter half of the event. Locals and visitors mingled and walked around the park while dining on all the cuisine and drinks. Performances by One Trick Pony and Taboo were icing on top of an already great cake.

Started in 2010 and located on the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay, founder Tal Petty grows oysters with a "unique and delicious taste" according to their website. The 300-acre oyster farm takes pride in its oysters, including "Sweet Jesus," "Hollywood," "Va Va Voom," and "Seasiders." Their mission is "to sustainably farm highest quality oysters for discerning customers." The company does all of this while leaving "its environment a better place," contributing to Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts.

Petty started by dipping his toe into aquaculture as a hobby. While living in Bethesda, he began raising oysters on the weekends at his family's farm. Nearly ten years later, Hollywood Oyster operates on that same farm, feeding oyster lovers up and down the coast.

The festival falls opposite of the U.S. Oyster Festival that is held in October at the St. Mary's County Fairgrounds. 2019 will be the national extravaganza's 53rd annual event.

Historic St. Mary's City details the history of the oyster in the Chesapeake. Entering the Bay 5,000 years ago, oysters are a pivotal part of the Southern Maryland ecosystem. Supplying millions of bushels through the oyster boom of the 1800s, St. Mary's and the other Bay oyster canneries provided it's sought after shellfish across the world. Towns like Solomon's Island grew exponentially with the success of the industry that rivaled the gold rush out west. After years of over harvesting, the oyster population was reduced to virtually nothing but recent efforts by Maryland legislatures have begun to have a positive impact on the oyster population.

Aquaculture continues to play an important role in Southern Maryland and St. Mary's County, as is evident to its inclusion on the county's economic development plan.

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