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Intelligence

Want to learn how to grow queen conch in the Caribbean? Start online

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

eConch, a free online training program, helps Caribbean communities learn to conserve and culture the endangered queen conch

The queen conch (*Aliger gigas*) is a prized delicacy long harvested for food and revered for its beautiful shell. It's one of the most important molluscan fishery in the Caribbean region, second only to the spiny lobster fishery. However, intensive fishing and habitat degradation from urbanization and climate change have caused conch populations to significantly dwindle.

To boost queen conch stocks, Dr. Megan Davis, a research professor at Florida Atlantic University's Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, and Becky Holt, an assistant director for their aquaculture and conservation program at FAU Harbor Branch, have launched "[eConch](https://conchaquaculture.org/econch-1)" (<https://conchaquaculture.org/econch-1>)" – a free online training program to grow queen conch.

"We have received numerous requests throughout Florida and the Caribbean from community members, researchers, aquaculturists, conservationists, educators and students to learn how to conserve and culture queen conch," said Davis.

The program is reportedly easy to follow, allows users to move at their own pace, includes high-quality



A free online training program called eConch has been launched to teach Caribbean communities how to grow and conserve queen conch. Photo of Dr. Megan Davis by IsleLens – Tyrie Moss.

video and provides access to expert advice. The training also includes a comprehensive manual, which provides step-by-step complete illustrations and photos of how to culture queen conch.



(<https://link.chtbl.com/aquapod>).

The experiential online learning program includes seven descriptive how-to modules. Module topics include collection and hatching of egg masses; larval rearing in the hatchery; microalgae culture to feed the larvae; metamorphosis; nursery culture of the juveniles; ranching for food; and restoration of the species.

“In addition to their socioeconomic importance, the queen conch plays a critical ecological role in seagrass beds,” said Davis. “Aquaculture, along with conservation of breeding populations and fishery management, are ways we can help ensure the longevity of this important species.”

[Read more here \(https://conchaquaculture.org/econch-1\)](https://conchaquaculture.org/econch-1).

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