Annual International Conference and Exposition of the World Aquaculture Society 26 April- 2 May 1999, Sydney Australia (1999):651

Pearl Oyster Propagators - Leaders in Pearl Oyster Aquaculture Technology; Bridging the Gap between Old and New with Research and Development

R.A.Rose, M.M. Mannion, M. Bell, L.J. Ryan, R.D. Hillbrick, R.J. Leslie-Rose

Pearl Oyster Propagators P/L 8 Kelat Court, Bayview, Northern Territory, 0820 Australia.

Poster

Pearl Oyster Propagators presents a poster displaying the aspects of farming artificially propagated *Pinctada maxima* for pearl cultivation. Also a brochure detailing aspects of the evolution of south sea pearl production, from past to present and future pearl cultivating systems.

During the early to mid 1980's, hatchery produced oysters began to replace wild stock used for pearl production. One of the first Australian pearl oyster hatchery specialist companies, Pearl Oyster Propagators, began designing, constructing, training and managing hatcheries in Western Australia, Northern Territory, Indonesia and Thailand.

Hatchery-produced oysters may very well increase the annual supply of cultivated south sea pearls in the future, but may not adversely affect market conditions. Success may be patterned after that of the edible oyster, prawn and salmon industries. That is: although the price may decrease, the market could very well expand, as more consumers could afford to purchase the product.

Hatchery technology in Australia is still in its infancy. Pearl Oyster Propagators is dedicated to the research and development of a "merino" pearl oyster and has been involved in research projects with Commonwealth Research Centre for Aquaculture (CRC) and Commonwealth Fisheries Research Development Corporation (FRDC). During the course of this research, Pearl Oyster Propagators trained and supervised two PhD and two MSc students.

