

EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN AQUACULTURE: DEVELOPING SKILLS IN THE AUSTRIAN FISHERIES SECTOR

C. Bauer, D. Achleitner and F. Keil

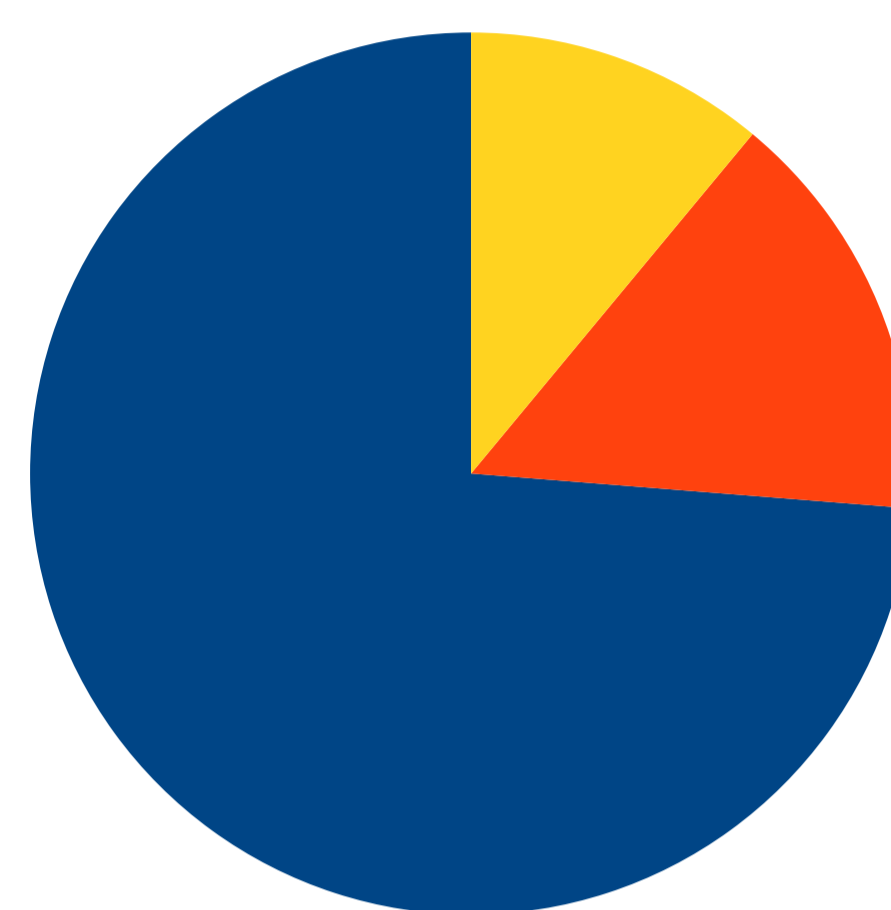
Introduction

The aquaculture sector in Austria is relatively small compared to other sectors in Austrian agriculture, making it one of the smallest within the EU. In 2021, the total production of food fish in Austria reached 4,920 metric tons, as reported by Statistics Austria. This sector is primarily categorized into three major forms of production: salmonid farming, carp pond farming, and production in recirculating aquaculture systems (RAS). Despite its modest size, the Austrian aquaculture sector can rely on a fundamental basis of training and education, which is based on blended learning with a mix of face-to-face classes, practical lessons, and online and self-learning elements. The lectures are delivered by professionals from various fields, including economics, veterinary medicine, jurisprudence, and experienced practitioners. The vocational training in aquaculture primarily consists of three main components, offering comprehensive knowledge and skills to aspiring professionals in the field.

Aquaculture in Austria

Production 2021: 4920 t

■ Salmonid farming ■ Carp pond farming
■ RAS



Beside Salmonid farming and Carp pond culture, lake fisheries is also part of the training. © BAW-IFG

Skilled Worker in the Fishing Industries

The education is modular and can be completed within three years. The program covers topics such as salmonid aquaculture, carp pond farming and RAS, fish biology, lake management, freshwater ecology, fish health, and hydrology. The education in the special field of fisheries is conducted on behalf of the "Lehrlings- und Fachausbildungsstelle" of the Board of Agriculture for people throughout Austria. Subject-specific lessons take place at the institute in Scharfling, while general lessons and fish processing are conducted at the "abz Salzkammergut" in Altmünster. Similar to other professional guilds, the fisheries instruction follows a dual system, requiring apprentices to attend school in addition to their employment. The seven modules are conducted in rotation, allowing access to each module. The participants graduate after an exam by an examination board.

Master Craftsman – Master in Fisheries

On behalf of the Agricultural and Forestry Apprenticeship and Technical Training Center Upper Austria, fishery management master courses are centrally conducted for all of Austria at the Federal Office for Water Management. The 2.5-year training is modular, and entry is only possible for a complete module rotation. In addition to deepening fishing industry expertise, the training focuses on business and corporate management. Independent of the technical courses, the modules Instructor Course and Law & Agricultural Policy can be completed separately, with offerings available in all federal states of Austria. The individual modules are completed with an examination (written/oral). At the end of the training, there is a 5-hour written exam. A core element of the master craftsman training is the independent preparation of a master thesis in the specialist area of fisheries management, which is presented as part of a master craftsman examination before a commission.



How to measure water quality and zooplankton.
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Continuing Education and Basic Training

For individuals interested in aquaculture who do not wish to complete the skilled worker course, there is the option to join a basic training course. These courses consist of 40 hours and provide insights into the major concepts of fish production. The course is available for salmonid farming, carp pond farming, or RAS.

Further Information

For additional information on education and training in aquaculture in Austria, please visit <https://www.baw.at/en/fish-and-water/education-and-training.html>.

