

GROWTH OF THE HATCHERY-PRODUCED JUVENILE PEARL OYSTER,
PINCTADA MAXIMA (JAMESON) IN THE GULF OF THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

Hatchery-produced juveniles of *Pinctada maxima*, one year old, with 5.3 cm mean shell length, were grown in Prachuap Khiri Khan Bay in metal frame trays covered with one inch mesh size nylon net. The trays were hung from bamboo raft to about 1.5 m below the surface. In the culture area, sea water temperature ranged from 26-34 °C and salinity from 30-35 ‰. The mean length increments were 6.5, 2.3, and 1.7 cm per year in the first, second, and third year of culture. Survival rates were 75.0, 44.9, and 51.6 % respectively. The pearl oysters attained a shell length of 15.8 cm after four years. Growth of the pearl oysters obtained in culture was rather poor compared to natural growth. Problems due to heavy fouling and unsatisfactory environmental conditions are discussed.