

LET  
**SEAWEED**  
SURPRISE YOU



Sea Grant

Seaweed Hub

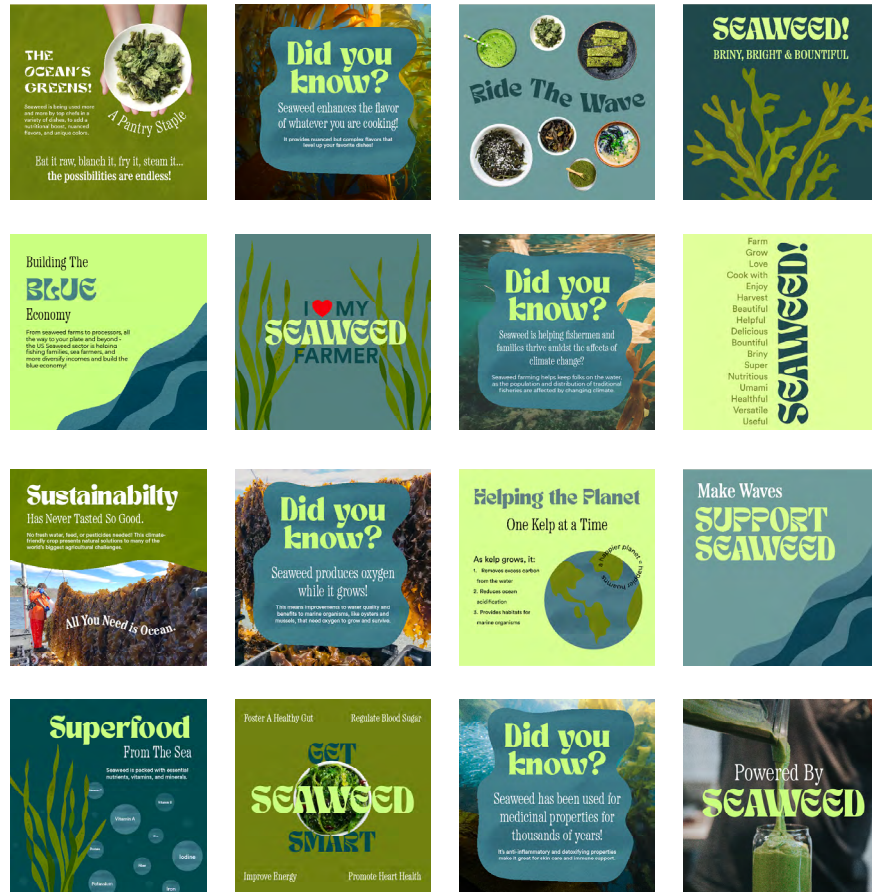
# Seaweed Marketing Toolkit

Market your seaweed business!  
Download social media graphics and  
more at [SeaweedToolkit.com](https://SeaweedToolkit.com)



# Your Toolkit

Let Seaweed Surprise You is a campaign initiative from the minds behind the National Sea Grant Seaweed Hub. We know marketing is a key priority for the US seaweed sector and we're here to help!



# Inside the Toolkit

Your toolkit contains ways you can better brand and market your business, including marketing materials like posters + social graphics, you can download and use.

## Marketing Areas of Focus

- Nutrition
- Culinary
- Environment
- Economy

## Branding 101

## Raising Capital

## Public Relations

# Marketing

Marketing can be daunting – there are so many ways to approach it and so many opinions on the topic. Start with strategy around your goals and your audience, and the basics below, and you'll be ahead of the game in no time.

## Pro tips:

### BE CONSISTENT

In your messaging, your look, your feel and how often you are posting. This will create brand recognition for your company and product, and keep your customers constantly checking to see what's next.

### THINK LOCAL TO GROW

Utilize those around you to build growth. Leverage your partners networks, followers and more to help you scale (best news? It helps them too).

### CHANNELS

Explore various marketing channels and see which you are able to be the most consistent with: Email, Social Media (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube), PR (reach out to publications), and printed materials. There's a lot you can do for free, and consider paid advertising or tech-savvy assistants when the time is right.

### BE VISIBLE

People want to get to know YOU, as the founder of your business. Put yourself out there, get photos taken, make videos, and share your knowledge and story across your marketing channels. It doesn't have to be perfectly polished.

### ALWAYS INCLUDE AN ACTION

All marketing should lead users to a "call to action", or CTA. Guide them to purchase, to your website to sign up, to attend your event, or whatever you want them to do.

### BUILD YOUR LIST

To this day, email marketing continues to be the highest return on investment of all. Building your email list is key. Market an incentive, like a discount or free resource for email subscribers, to drive sign-ups.

### HOST CONTESTS OR GIVEAWAYS

This is a great way to feature your product, partners, or both. Launch an email or social media giveaway on your own or as a collaboration with other businesses to capitalize on one another's following and growing your own.



## Nutrition

Seaweed is the ultimate power food, providing your body with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants it needs to thrive.



## Culinary Arts

Move over, kale! Seaweed is the new darling of the culinary world, bringing its unique flavor and texture to dishes from around the globe.



## Environment

No fresh water, feed, or pesticides needed! This climate-friendly crop presents a natural solution to many of the world's biggest agricultural challenges.



## Economy

By creating new jobs and supporting sustainable livelihoods, seaweed farming is providing an economic boost for our communities!

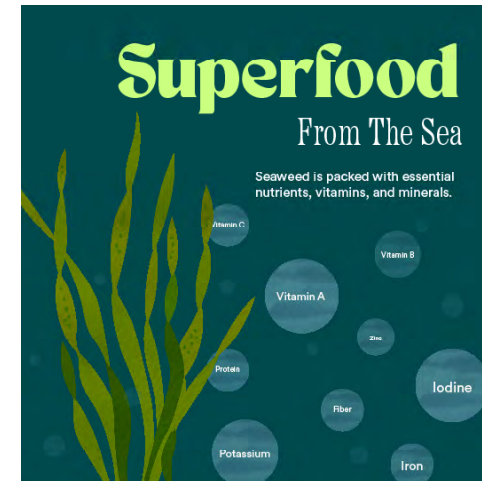
# Nutrition & Health

Seaweed and seaweed products offer a wide range of nutritional benefits. Use this guide for messaging in your marketing, but keep in mind that different types of seaweed have unique compositions and benefits.

Use the key messaging on these pages as inspiration and quotes for your marketing materials and social media. Pair them with the graphics in the toolkit or use easy design tools to create your own.

KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING POINTS
Contains essential nutrients, vitamins, and minerals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marine micronutrients and Macro-nutrients like protein and fiber</li> <li>Vitamins A, B (1, 2, 3, 9) and C with different compositions depending on species of seaweed</li> <li>Minerals, including calcium, iron, potassium, magnesium,</li> <li>Trace minerals, like zinc and iodine</li> <li>High source of dietary iodine</li> </ul>
Beneficial to health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seaweed provides a highly concentrated nutritional boost that aligns with many diets (Keto, Paleo, vegan, etc.)</li> <li>Contains unique bioactive components not found in land plants</li> <li>Low in carbohydrates and great for heart health; contains anti-inflammatory compounds and cholesterol-lowering soluble fiber that regulate blood sugar</li> <li>Known for immune support with antibacterial/antiviral properties and for detoxing the body</li> <li>Red and brown seaweeds (like kelp!) have bioactive pigments called carotenoids that are powerful antioxidants.</li> <li>Unique fibers and complex carbs support the gut microbiome.</li> <li>An original source of iodine, which is important for thyroid function, prenatal, and plant-based diets</li> </ul>
Great for skin and wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seaweeds are particularly well-known for skin health, anti-aging, and anti-inflammatory properties and have played a key role in wellness for thousands of years.</li> <li>Thalassotherapy, or “seawater therapy”, is an ancient Greek practice that uses seaweed in water baths to create mineral-rich water that rejuvenates the skin.</li> <li>Many cultures used seaweed to treat scars, burns, and rashes.</li> <li>Seaweeds are a unique natural product that we are still discovering medicinal and pharmaceutical uses for.</li> </ul>

Use these social media posts! [Download at seaweedtoolkit.com](http://seaweedtoolkit.com)



\*Suggested captions are provided for the social media posts above at [SeaweedToolkit.com](http://SeaweedToolkit.com)

# Culinary Arts

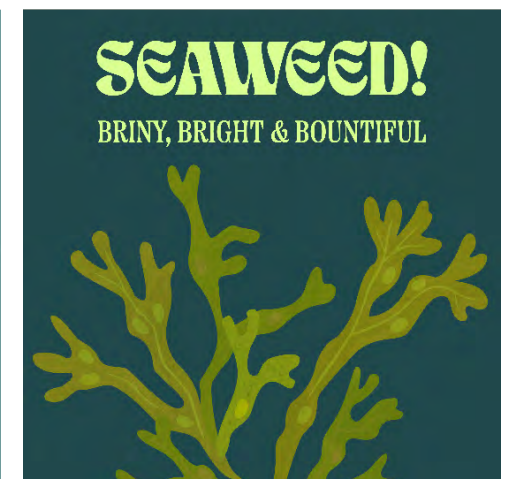
Where sea-to-table and the plant-based movement meet, domestic seaweed is a hero ingredient in cuisine!

Market the culinary benefits of seaweed by showcasing new products, chefs, restaurants, and recipes to get consumers excited.

**Fun fact:** Seaweed is an unsung flavor hero! It can act a lot like celery in a dish — you don't always know it's there, but it makes a huge difference in the flavor!

KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING POINTS
A versatile kitchen ingredient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be added to a variety of dishes as a star-ingredient or subtle flavor enhancer</li> <li>• US seaweed is available in diverse forms for cooks of all experience levels. Get a taste for seaweed with ready-to-use products (like smoothie cubes or pre-made salads) or explore new recipes with seaweed blades, flakes, slaw, and more.</li> <li>• Can be eaten and used raw, blanched, dried, frozen, fermented, pickled, you name it!</li> <li>• Quick and easy to prepare—seaweed cooks in seconds!</li> <li>• Not just for sushi and seaweed salad... add it to seafood dishes, stir fries, avocado toast, or use it for desserts and cocktails.</li> <li>• Try replacing your usual greens in recipes (spinach, kale) with kelp.</li> <li>• A great, natural alternative salt source</li> </ul>
Up-and-coming in the culinary world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Top chefs are using it more and more, as an important part of the sea-to-table movement.</li> <li>• A perfect fit within major food trends like plant-based cuisine, plant-based protein, food from the sea, and climate-conscious food</li> </ul>
Nuanced and complex flavor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can't put your finger on that complex, subtle flavor? Maybe it's seaweed! Seaweed is known for adding nuanced, umami flavor.</li> <li>• Can take on and enhance the flavor of what you're already cooking</li> <li>• A great option if you're looking to try something new!</li> </ul>

Use these social media posts! [Download at seaweedtoolkit.com](http://seaweedtoolkit.com)



\*Suggested captions are provided for the social media posts above at [SeaweedToolkit.com](http://SeaweedToolkit.com)

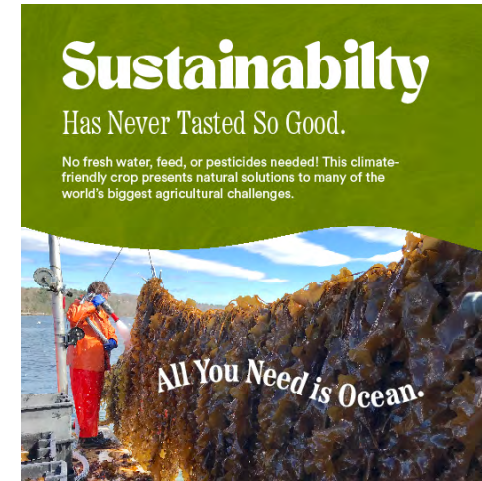
# Environment

We know seaweed is amazing for the environment. Here are some key points to talk about, as well as pro-tips for talking about climate claims and terminology.

**Fun Fact:** Blue Carbon is known to be stored by mangroves and sea grasses, aka “the trees of the sea.” Seaweed is a new and exciting development in the blue carbon space!

KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING POINTS	
Easy on the planet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No fresh water, feed, or pesticides needed! This climate-friendly crop presents natural solutions to many of the world’s biggest agricultural challenges.</li> <li>Seaweed products, from food to fertilizer, are climate-conscious replacements for everyday items and practices.</li> <li>One of the most scalable + regenerative crops, grows faster than terrestrial plants</li> </ul>	
Climate-Friendly / Improves Ocean Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As seaweed grows, it uptakes carbon and nutrients and produces oxygen—a huge win for our oceans.</li> <li>Seaweed helps mitigate ocean acidification by reducing excess carbon in the water.</li> <li>Helps marine animals, like oysters and mussels, survive and become stronger by producing oxygen.</li> <li>Provides key ecosystem services, like improvements to water quality, mitigation of climate change, and habitat for other marine organisms</li> <li>Can restore coastal habitats and ecosystems</li> </ul>	
Seaweed & Carbon 101	<p><b>Carbon Capture:</b> the process of capturing carbon dioxide before it’s released into the atmosphere.</p>	Seaweed captures and temporarily stores carbon as it grows. Farms are actively capturing carbon in the ocean.
	<p><b>Blue Carbon:</b> carbon captured by the worlds oceans and coastal ecosystems, including seagrasses, mangroves, salt marshes, and seaweed.</p>	There’s lots of interest in these coastal blue carbon ecosystems for their potential to sequester carbon. Seaweed plays a role in coastal blue carbon!
	<p><b>Carbon Sequestration:</b> long-term capture and storage of carbon. By long term, we mean 100+ years. There is lots of interest in the potential for wild and farmed seaweed to sequester carbon!</p>	The long-term (100+ year) fate of carbon captured by seaweed can be difficult to account for. Farming seaweed does not automatically mean carbon is being sequestered. Science is looking to see if carbon is sequestered under seaweed farms and we’re excited about that!
Systems Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the world’s dependence on freshwater food production.</li> <li>Shift our food system towards low-impact, high efficiency crops.</li> <li>Offer a deeper connection to the ocean.</li> </ul>	

Use these social media posts! [Download at seaweedtoolkit.com](http://seaweedtoolkit.com)



\*Suggested captions are provided for the social media posts above at [SeaweedToolkit.com](http://SeaweedToolkit.com)

# Economy

Seaweed production is helping build the “blue economy” in the US, generating jobs and economic opportunity for coastal families and communities. Let the world know!

**Fun Fact:** Seaweed farming is helping diversify the income and livelihoods of folks who work on the water, like commercial fishermen and oyster farmers!

KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING POINTS
Seaweed production creates jobs and diversifies income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seasonal production of seaweed diversifies income for fishermen, shellfish farmers, and working waterfront families.</li> <li>Seaweed farming integrates into and enhances our working waterfronts, increasing demand and work for dockside facilities and infrastructure.</li> <li>Seaweed production benefits coastal communities and is well suited for rural communities that depend on natural resources.</li> <li>Kelp is a winter crop that can provide supplemental income during the slow season for folks on the water.</li> <li>Seaweed farming in the US is recognized as an accessible and growing sector for women and folks historically underrepresented on the water.</li> </ul>
Many products and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seaweed isn't just for food! Businesses in the US are exploring seaweed for bioplastics, biomaterials, pet and animal feeds, soil amendmendments and fertilizers, cosmetics, and versatile biorefinery products.</li> <li>Currently, you can find seaweed in foods, supplements, fertilizers, medicine, cosmetics, animal feeds, and more.</li> <li>Businesses include seaweed farms and harvesters, processors, product producers, distributors, proprietors, and more!</li> <li>Value chains for seaweed in the US are growing.</li> </ul>
Helping communities adapt to climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seaweed farming provides opportunities for fishing families to become more resilient as climate change affects the population and distribution of traditional fisheries.</li> <li>Seaweed production is well suited for rural communities that depend on natural resources and are likely to be hard-hit by the effects of climate change</li> </ul>

Use these social media posts! [Download at seaweedtoolkit.com](http://seaweedtoolkit.com)



\*Suggested captions are provided for the social media posts above at [SeaweedToolkit.com](http://SeaweedToolkit.com)

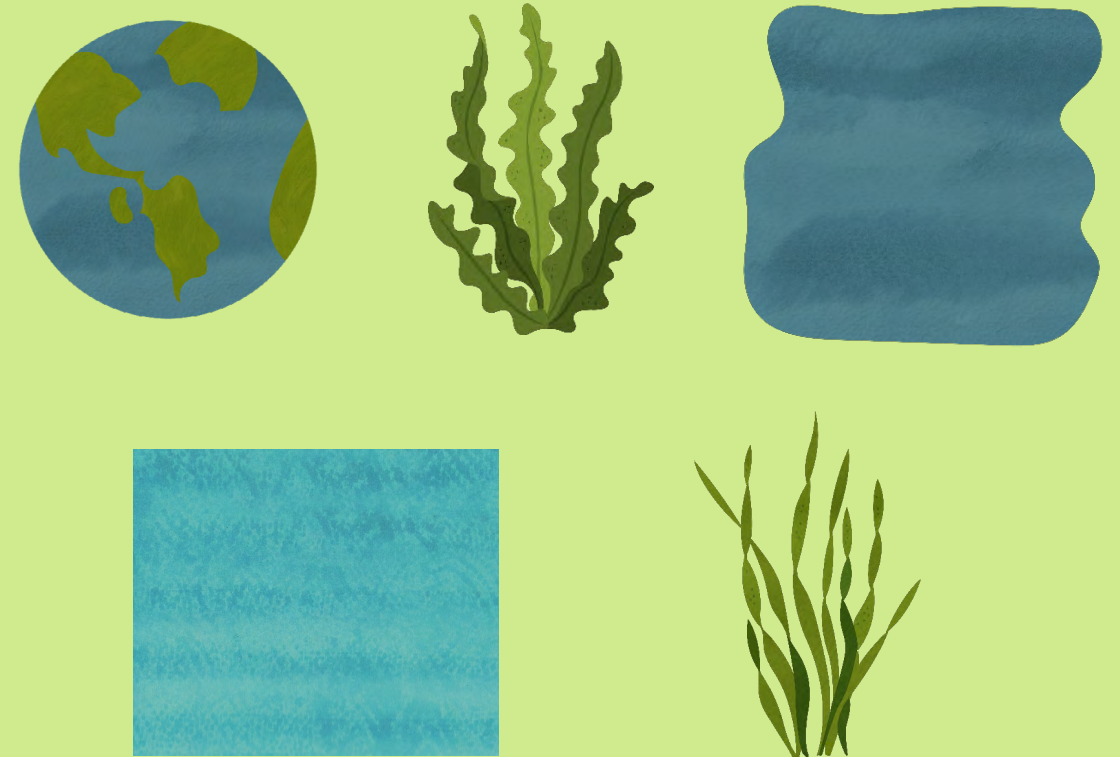
# Posters



These eye-catching posters can be utilized in various marketing efforts such as advertising, social media, and more to help capture the attention of and educate potential customers and educate about seaweed.

Download and print these posters at [SeaweedToolkit.com](http://SeaweedToolkit.com).

# Graphic Element Library



Looking to DIY your own marketing materials? We've got you covered with a library of seaweed-y graphic elements that can be easily incorporated into your designs.

Download the Graphic Element Library at [SeaweedToolkit.com](http://SeaweedToolkit.com).





# Raising Capital

## Insights + Resources for Small Businesses to fund their enterprise:

There are many ways to raise capital for your small business. This can come in the form of grants, loans, partnerships, crowdfunding, or outside investment. It is always recommended to reference your local or state Chamber of Commerce sites for specific insights as they relate the location in which you operate.

Once you have your sights set on your ideal avenue for fundraising, you will often have to present a business plan or pitch deck. This is a very effective way to format both:

1. Company Purpose
2. Problem
3. Solution
4. Why Now
5. Market Size
6. Competition
7. Product
8. Business Model
9. Team
10. Financials

This proven methodology has helped countless businesses convey the value of their business to potential additional stakeholders, and generate cash flow. Business plans are critical for unique start-up operations, like seaweed farms and value-added product companies, where funders will have many questions and are likely not familiar with the industry.

# Public Relations

PR is no longer a ‘nice-to-have’ for today’s businesses. No matter what stage you are in, every organization needs to have strategy behind how they tell their story to the world, the right way.

PR, or “Public Relations” can seem daunting to a small business, but it’s important to keep in mind that it’s just building positive publicity for your business, helping you raise brand awareness and reaffirm your mission to customers on a local or national scale.

## Where to begin?

All editors (both print and digital) are looking for what the industry calls a “Media Kit” when receiving a pitch from a small business. This is something you can easily create yourself, and includes the following:

**A Bio:** Of both the company and the owners

**Ready to Use Photography:** Depending on the angle of the story, this can be images of you, your team, your products. Just ensure they are high quality and you are ready to share them with the world!

**Pitch Topics:** Carve out a few angles, unique to you, that you could see as headlines in your desired publications + use those to pitch.

**A List of Contacts:** Start simple. Find 5-10 publications and the editors there to send your media kit to.

Remember, you don’t need an expensive PR agency when you’re starting out. Build relationships with editors in the same way that you would with potential partners. Reach out to them regularly with new ideas for stories, and if the publication is the right fit, eventually you will get a press hit!



sea you  
later

## Resources:

[SeaweedHub.org](http://SeaweedHub.org)

[SeaweedToolkit.com](http://SeaweedToolkit.com)

[LeapYearBranding.com/resources](http://LeapYearBranding.com/resources)

And don't forget, you can always reach out to your states Sea Grant extension team for more information!

Scan to access the toolkit:



## Toolkit Sponsored By:



National Seaweed Hub

Market Opportunities Work Group