

# Flat Oyster Breeding Line

## Breeding parasite-free flat oysters

The Rich North Sea is committed to enabling innovative projects that result in a healthy and rich sea. In the past, parts of the Dutch North Sea were covered with reefs, where fish, crustaceans, shellfish and other organisms lived. But due to fishing and disease, biodiversity has decreased and nearly every natural reef has disappeared. Today, flat oyster reefs no longer occur further off the coast of our North Sea.

Oysters are important for a healthy underwater ecosystem. They build reefs, filter the water, recycle nutrients and attract other animal species. They produce many larvae, but the chances of the larvae's survival are small. Oyster larvae often don't reach the next phase of life – called 'spat'. A large number of healthy flat oysters are needed to restore large-scale reefs. That's why The Rich North Sea, together with expert partners, has begun to cultivate flat oysters. By ensuring the use of healthy, parasite-free parent oysters, the Breeding Line has already produced **many healthy and parasite-free flat oyster offspring**.



### Location

The oyster breeding takes place in Kamperland, Yerseke and off the island of Texel. Young broods are released near the Brouwersdam.



### Research

Together with experts, we investigate – amongst other things – optimal nutrition and ideal temperature at each phase of the oysters' lives.



### Monitoring

Divers monitor both the oyster brood's survival and growth.



### Reef recovery

We will use the data collected from the Oyster Breeding Line for reef restoration projects in the North Sea.



1

Mature flat oysters are prepared for spawning and are fed a variety of algae for nutrition. After approximately 7 to 10 days, the oysters release larvae.

2

The oyster larvae swim around freely and develop over the next 14 days.

3

The oyster larvae then attach to a variety of surfaces, like shells, stones, reef structures and more, to continue development.

4

The brood is placed in a test set-up in the Voordelta.

### More information:

[derijkenoordzee.nl/en/location/flat-oyster-breeding-line](https://derijkenoordzee.nl/en/location/flat-oyster-breeding-line)