

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Mot Hennessy takes sustainability strategy to local level with Billion Oyster Project

November 27, 2019



Billion Oyster Project is reintroducing oysters to New York Harbor. Image credit: Von Wong Photography

By STAFF REPORTS

Mot Hennessy's U.S. importer is taking up the issue of restoring oyster reefs in New York Harbor through the support of nonprofit Billion Oyster Project.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

Through the new partnership, Mot Hennessy USA will serve as the Champagne and wine sponsor for the organization's fundraising events, and its employees will donate up to 200 hours towards the cause. Mot Hennessy's partnership reflects parent company LVMH's broader sustainability goals, as the group seeks to put environmental issues at the forefront of its operations.

"The Mot Hennessy USA team is honored to partner with Billion Oyster Project," said Jim Clerkin, president/CEO of Mot Hennessy North America, in a statement. "As an organization that is committed to the seven areas of sustainability including water and effluents embarking on this journey with Billion Oyster Project is an outstanding way to support a local program that also aligns with our dedication to sustainable development."

Reef restoration

Oysters play a key role in marine ecosystems. Oyster reefs can provide a habitat for other sea life, and they filter water.

In New York Harbor, the reefs help to protect the shoreline during storms.

Billion Oyster Project collects shells from 75 New York restaurants, including Mot Hennessy accounts such as Mandarin Oriental and Per Se. These shells serve as a home for larval oysters, which can only survive if they find a hard surface to attach to.

So far, the project has planted 13 reefs, and 30 million oysters have been planted.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

Why do we reclaim over 8,000 pounds of oyster shell from NYC restaurants each week? Beyond rescuing this resource from landfills, it turns out that these shells rich in calcium carbonate are the perfect hard surface for new oysters to attach to, and grow their own shell. As #ScienceNewsForStudents points out, "many other organisms in the ocean protect themselves with a tough shell... formed from calcium carbonate. This chemical has one atom of calcium hooked to a carbonate ion. Under normal ocean conditions, a critter can make enough calcium carbonate from calcium and carbonate in the water to build its shell. But as more CO₂ from the atmosphere dissolves into the ocean, more bicarbonate forms. That uses up carbonate, leaving shell-building organisms with less shell-building calcium carbonate." #ClimateWeekNYC

A post shared by Billion Oyster Project (@billionoyster) on Sep 26, 2019 at 8:32am PDT

Instagram post from Billion Oyster Project

In addition to its work physically restoring reefs, Billion Oyster Project conducts educational programs for local schools.

As part of its new partnership with the nonprofit, Mot Hennessy USA will sponsor the organization's fundraisers in 2020, including The Billion Oyster Party and Harbor Up! events.

"Billion Oyster Project is proud to be partnering with Mot Hennessy to grow our community, in size and enthusiasm, around restoring New York Harbor," said Pete Malinowski, executive director of Billion Oyster Project, in a statement. "Each shell collected, oyster planted and classroom engaged propels our movement forward and closer to a healthier harbor."

Mot Hennessy's sea-based sustainability efforts extend beyond the New York market.

In 2017, LVMH-owned Scottish distiller Glenmorangie launched a two-fold project to clean the wastewater produced during the whisky-making process.

Glenmorangie's projects will work to purify and clean the waters near the whisky brand's distillery on the Scottish coast by reintroducing native oysters and through the opening of an anaerobic digestion plant. Across sectors, brands have launched corporate social responsibility efforts that work to protect the environment from manufacturing ([see story](#)).

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.