



SHELLFISH HARVEST REQUIREMENTS

MARYLAND SHELLFISH AQUACULTURE

CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 15, 2011

**Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Infectious Disease and Environmental Health Administration**

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State Shellfish Standardization Officer
**Center for Food Protection/
Office of Environmental Health & Food Protection**



MISSION

- To improve the health of Marylanders by reducing the transmission of infectious diseases, helping impacted persons live longer, healthier lives, and protecting individuals and communities from environmental health hazards
- We work in partnership with local health departments, providers, community based organizations, and public and private sector agencies to provide public health leadership in the prevention, control, monitoring, and treatment of infectious diseases and environmental health hazards.



Clean Water-Safe Shellfish

- Pollution sources that impact shellfish or may affect the water quality in shellfish growing areas are identified and mitigated
- Sewage treatment plant performance is assessed to prevent contamination
- New monitoring stations may be established for near-shore aquaculture activities



Location

- MD Growing Area Classifications
- Approved-Harvest at any time
- Conditionally Approved-based on rainfall events-may only harvest during the open status
- Restricted-Harvest by approval only
- Closed Safety Zone-no harvest allowed



Harvest to Table



- *Vibrio* bacteria-naturally occurring in all estuarine waters and not related to classification or water quality
- Levels of *Vibrio* increase when the water temperatures rise
- *Vibrio* bacteria are pathogenic-cause human illness
- Shellfish especially oysters concentrate bacteria from the water in their gills



Harvest to Table



- Because shellfish are often eaten raw there may be no cook step to kill or lower bacteria inside the animal
- *Vibrio* bacteria increase rapidly when shellfish are removed from the growing waters
- The higher the number of bacteria in the shellfish the more likelihood to cause illness



Shellfish Safety

- The requirements for *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* control are established in Maryland regulation (COMAR 10.15.07.06)
- To control the growth of *Vibrio* bacteria in shellfish the harvester must limit the time of harvest and the dealer must refrigerate and cool the oysters promptly



Control at Harvest



- From June 1-September 30, a harvester shall:
 - Protect harvested oysters from the sun
 - Deliver oysters to a certified dealer by 10:00 AM on the day of harvest



Control after Harvest



- From June 1-September 30 a Dealer:
 - May not receive oysters after 10:00 AM
 - Shall place the oysters under temperature control immediately upon receipt
 - Shall cool the oysters to 50 F within 10 hours of placing under temp control
 - May not ship oysters until they reach 50 F
 - May not sell oysters that are not cooled to 50 F within 10 hours of temp control



Licenses and Permits

- A Shellfish Aquaculture Harvester Permittee (SAHP) must meet the “harvester” requirements.
- A Shellfish Dealer, licensed and certified by the Dept of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH), must meet the “dealer” requirements.



Requirements



- All dealers who purchase oysters from a SAHP during the months of June-September must have:
 - A Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point Plan (HACCP) that addresses the hazards of summer harvest of oysters
 - Refrigeration that is adequate to cool oysters promptly and maintain the oysters at 45 F or less



Responsibility

- Safe harvest and handling of shellfish , during and post harvest ensure not just food safety but food quality
- It is in the interest of all to have Maryland shellfish meet the highest standards
- Protecting your shellfish protects the industry





Contacts & Information

- NSSP Model Ordinance and the Interstate Certified Shellfish Shippers List (ICSSL) www.issc.org
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