

Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program - Manual of Operations

DEFINITIONS

Approved Area - The classification of a shellfish growing area which has been approved by the shellfish control authority for growing or harvesting shellfish for direct marketing. The classification of an approved area is determined through a sanitary survey conducted by the shellfish control authority in accordance with Chapter 2 of this Manual. An approved shellfish growing area may be temporarily placed in the closed status when a public health emergency, resulting from for instance, a hurricane or flooding, is declared.

Blower - A container for washing shucked shellfish which uses forced air as a means of agitation.

Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program - A program to classify harvesting areas and control the commercial and recreational harvesting of molluscs and processing of product for the consumer market.

CALA - Canadian Association for Laboratory Accreditation Inc. A recognized ISO accrediting body.

Certification Number - The number assigned by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to each certified shellfish dealer. It consists of a one to five digit number preceded by the two letter province abbreviation and followed by the two letter symbol designating the type of operation certified.

Closed Area - A growing area where the harvesting of shellfish is temporarily or permanently not permitted, except by special permit for specific purposes.

Closed status - Any classified area where shellfish harvest is not authorized.

Coliform Group - The coliform group includes all of the aerobic and facultative anaerobic, Gram-negative, non spore-forming bacilli which ferment lactose with gas formation within 48 hours at 35°C.

Commingling - The act of combining different lots of shellfish or shucked shellfish.

Conditionally Approved Area - The classification of a shellfish growing area which has been determined by the shellfish control authority to meet approved area criteria for a predictable period. The period is conditional upon established performance standards specified in a conditional management plan.

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Conditional Management Plan (CMP) - An agreement signed by relevant parties for the management of shellfish in conditionally classified areas.

Conditionally Restricted Area - The classification of a shellfish growing area which has been determined by the shellfish control authority to meet, at a minimum, the restricted classification criteria for a predictable period. The period is conditional upon established performance standards specified in a conditional management plan.

Container - Any bag, sack, tote, conveyance or other receptacle used for containing shellfish for holding or transporting.

Container Relaying - The transfer of shellfish from conditionally restricted or restricted areas in the open status to approved areas for natural biological cleansing in a container using the ambient environment as a treatment system.

Controlled Purification or Depuration - The process of using a controlled, aquatic environment to reduce the level of bacteria and viruses in live shellfish.

Dealer - A commercial shellfish shipper, reshipper, shucker-packer, repacker, or depuration processor or operation.

Depuration Plant - A depuration plant is a facility of one or more depuration units. A depuration unit is a tank or series of tanks supplied by a single process water system.

Depuration Processor (DP) - A person who receives shellstock from any classified area in the open status and submits such shellstock to an approved controlled purification process.

Detection - The point in time at which a waste water treatment or collection system release / discharge incident (as defined in the relevant CMP) is first detected by a waste water treatment plant or collection system operator (or delegate).

Dry Storage - The storage of shellstock out of water.

Emergency Closure - A shellfish harvesting area in the open status may be placed in the closed status when it is suspected that shellfish may be contaminated as a result of an emergency situation. These emergency situations may include natural or operational events such as hurricanes, flooding, and emergency oil, toxic chemical and major sewage spills.

Extended Container Relaying - The transfer of shellfish from conditionally restricted or restricted areas in the open status to

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approved areas for natural biological cleansing in a container, using the ambient environment as a treatment system, for a period of 14 days or greater.

Fecal Coliform Group - The fecal coliform group includes bacteria of the coliform group which will produce gas from lactose in a suitable multiple tube procedure liquid medium (EC or A-1) within 24 ± 2 hours at $44.5 \pm 0.2^\circ\text{C}$ in a water bath .

Growing Area - An area which supports or could support live shellfish.

Harvest Lot - A collection of bulk shellstock or containers of shellstock from a defined growing area taken by one or more harvesters and removed from the water for delivery to the processing facility on the same day. Where the amplitude of the tide does not allow harvesting except during a low-running (spring) tide, the product can be wet stored on the beach for a maximum of two weeks and taken to the processing plant as a lot.

Harvester - A person who takes shellfish, by any means, from a growing area.

Harvesting record - Is an official record identifying where, when, and the quantity of shellfish that was harvested by a harvester.

Heat Shock - The process of subjecting shellstock to any form of heat treatment, such as steam, hot water or dry heat for a short period of time prior to shucking to facilitate removal of the meat from the shell without substantially altering the physical or organoleptic characteristics of the shellfish.

Integrated Multi-trophic Aquaculture - The raising of shellfish and finfish within a 125 metre radius of one another in the marine environment.

ISO/IEC 17025:2005 - An internationally recognized standard describing the General Requirements for the Competence of testing and Calibration Laboratories jointly developed by the International Organization of Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrochemical Commission (IEC). (See also definition for SCC and CALA)

Lease - A defined geographic area in a marine environment described by a federal or provincial agency and approved by the Competent Authority (Shellfish Control Agency or provincial equivalent) for the purposes of culturing, harvesting and/or relaying (exploratory or commercial) of bivalve molluscs. This definition includes all tenures, licenses of occupation or licence issued under MCFR to an individual, group or company by the Competent Authority.

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Lot of Shellstock - A collection of bulk shellstock or containers of shellstock of no more than one day's harvest from a single defined growing area by one or more harvesters.

Lot of Shellstock for Depuration - Shellstock harvested from an area at a particular time and delivered to one depuration plant.

Lot of Shucked Shellfish - A collection of containers of no more than one day's shucked shellfish product produced under conditions as nearly uniform as possible and designated by a common container code or marking.

Marine Biotoxins - Poisonous compounds accumulated by shellfish feeding upon toxin containing dinoflagellates, such as *Alexandrium* (formerly *Gonyaulax* and *Protogonyaulax*) *cantenella*, *A. fundyense*, *A. tamarensis*, and *Ptychodiscus brevis*, or marine diatoms such as *Pseudo-Nitzschia* species (formerly *Nitzschia pungens*).

Master Harvester - A person employed, or assigned, by a federally registered shellfish establishment, to carry out specific monitoring duties at approved or conditionally approved shellfish areas in the open status and maintain records for the establishment, as described in the Quality Management Program.

Most Probable Number (MPN) - The MPN is a statistical estimate of the number of bacteria per unit volume and is determined from the number of positive results in a series of fermentation tubes.

National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP) - The cooperative United States, State-Food & Drug Administration (FDA)-Industry program, for certification of interstate shellfish shippers as described in the NSSP Model Ordinance. Foreign governments may be members by having a current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or agreement with the FDA.

Natural Relaying - The transfer of shellfish from conditionally restricted or restricted areas in the open status to approved areas for natural biological cleansing, using the ambient environment as a treatment system (Houser, 1964) for periods of 14 days or greater.

Notification - The point in time at which one of the federal CSSP partners receives notice from a waste water treatment or collection system operator (or delegate) of a release / discharge incident (as defined in the relevant CMP).

Poisonous or Deleterious Substance - A toxic compound occurring naturally or added to the environment that may be found in shellfish for which a regulatory tolerance limit or action level has been established or may be established to protect public

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health. Examples of naturally occurring substances would be paralytic shellfish toxins and trace elements, such as mercury, geologically leached from the environment. Examples of added substances would be agricultural pesticides and polynuclear aromatics from oil spills.

Process Batch - a quantity of shellstock used to fill each separate tank, or series of tanks, supplied by a single process water system for a specified depuration cycle in a depuration activity.

Prohibited Area - The classification of a shellfish growing area determined by the shellfish control authority where shellfish harvesting for food purposes is not permitted.

Quality Management Program (QMP) - A fish inspection and control system, that includes procedures, inspections and records, for the purpose of verifying and documenting the processing of fish and the safety and quality of fish processed in, exported from or imported into Canada.

Relaying - The transfer of shellfish from conditionally restricted or restricted areas in the open status to approved areas for natural biological cleansing using the ambient environment as a treatment system (Houser 1964).

Regional Interdepartmental Shellfish Committee (RISC) - The committee established under the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program (CSSP), composed of area/regional Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), Environment Canada (EC), Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) staff to, manage, prioritize, and coordinate CSSP activities. RISCs provide input, advice and final decisions on the classification of shellfish growing areas and on the management of microbiological, chemical and /or biotoxin contamination.

Remote Shellfish Area - A shellfish growing area that has no human habitation and is not impacted by any actual or potential pollution sources.

Repacker (RP) - A person other than the original certified shucker-packer who repacks shucked shellfish into other containers. A repacker may also repack and ship shellstock. A repacker shall not shuck shellfish.

Reshipper (RS) - A person who purchases shucked shellfish or shellstock from other certified shippers and sells the product without repacking or relabelling to other shippers, wholesalers or retailers.

Response - A series of actions taken by the federal shellfish control authorities as defined in the relevant CMP based on the classification of the area which will serve to ensure that product

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does not reach market and that the implicated area is placed in closed status.

Response Line - The boundary at which the sewage effluent plume is predicted to lie during a waste water treatment plant or collection system release/ discharge incident when the competent shellfish control authority will respond.

Restricted Area² - The classification of a shellfish growing area determined by the shellfish control authority where shellfish shall not be harvested for direct consumption.

Sanitary Survey - The evaluation of all actual and potential pollution sources and environmental factors having a bearing on shellfish growing area water quality.

Sanitize - The treatment to adequately treat food-contact surfaces by a process that is effective in destroying vegetative cells of microorganisms of public health significance and in substantially reducing the number of other undesirable microorganisms, but without adversely affecting the product or its safety for the consumer.

SCC - Standards Council of Canada. A recognized ISO accrediting body.

Scheduled Controlled Purification Process - A process which places shellfish harvested from areas in the open status into a controlled aquatic environment selected by the processor and approved by the shellfish control agency as adequate to effectively reduce the level of bacteria and viruses in live shellfish.

Scheduled Heat Shock Process - The process selected by the processor and approved by the shellfish control agency to heat shock a shellfish species in order to facilitate shucking without adversely affecting the microbial quality or altering the organoleptic characteristics of the species.

Seed - Any sub-market size bivalve shellfish that has been gathered directly from the wild, or grown in a hatchery, and transplanted or relayed to a private lease site or public shellfish bed for grow-out.

Shellfish - All edible species of oysters, clams, mussels and scallops* either shucked, in the shell, fresh or fresh frozen or whole or in part. For the purposes of marine biotoxin control predatory gastropod molluscs shall also be included.

²Restricted areas were formerly classified as "closed" areas

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* Except for the adductor muscle

Shellstock - Shellfish in the shell.

Shellfish Control Agency - The department or agencies of the Government of Canada that are signatories to the interdepartmental Memorandum of Understanding which is found in Appendix V of this manual and that have the responsibility to provide reasonable assurance that shellfish are safe for human consumption.

Shellstock Shipper (SS) - A person who grows, harvests, buys, or repacks and sells shellstock. They are not authorised to shuck shellfish nor to repack shucked shellfish. A shellstock shipper may also ship shucked shellfish.

Short-term Container Relaying - Transfer of shellfish from areas in the open status to approved areas for natural biological cleansing in a container using the ambient environment as a treatment system for periods of less than 14 days.

Shucked Shellfish - Shellfish, whole or in part, from which one or both shells have been removed.

Shucker Packer (SP) - A person who shucks and packs shellfish. A shucker packer may act as a shellstock shipper or may repack shellfish originating from other certified dealers.

Spat - Newly settled spawn of bivalve shellfish that has been cultivated in a laboratory or hatchery or collected from the wild using a variety of techniques (e.g., monofilament lines, cement-coated collectors, etc.).

Spring Tide - A tide of increased range that occurs twice monthly at the new and full phases of the moon.

Status - Describes whether shellfish harvest is permitted and is independent of the classification of the area¹

Open Status - Any classified area where shellfish harvest is authorized.

Transaction Record - A form(s) used to document each purchase or sale of shellfish at the wholesale level.

Turbidity - Reduced water clarity resulting from the presence of suspended matter.

¹ Open and closed status differs from openings and closures made pursuant to a prohibition order issued under the Management of Contaminated Fishery Regulations. For example, a Restricted area in the Open Status is limited to the harvest of shellfish by special licence for depuration or relay.

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Wet Storage - The temporary storage of "live" shellfish from approved sources, intended for marketing, in containers or floats in natural bodies of seawater or in tanks containing natural or synthetic seawater.