

CLAM, MUSSEL, OYSTER, SCALLOP AND GEODUCK SAFETY

The following rules apply only to molluscan type shellfish (clams, mussels, oysters, scallops, geoducks, etc.). They do not apply to finned fish (salmon, halibut, tuna, etc.), or to crustaceans (crabs, shrimp, lobsters).

RECEIVING

Retail food service establishments must purchase and use only fresh or frozen oysters, clams, mussels, and whole or roe-on scallops, as shellstock ((in the shell), or shucked (shell-removed) shell stock, that:

- Are from certified interstate shellfish shippers, and
- Are properly labeled and tagged, and
- Have an internal meat temperature, upon arrival, of 45° F or less (shucked) or 50° F or less (in –the-shell).

TAGS AND LABEL INFORMATION

All shell stock entering a food service establishment must be accompanied by a durable,

Water proof tag or label containing the following information:

- The harvester’s name, address, and identification number;
- The dealer’s name, address, and certification number, if different from the harvester. In the case of a harvester’s tag that provides a place for one or more dealer’s names, addresses, and certification numbers, the dealer’s or dealers’ information shall be listed first;
- The date of harvesting;
- The most precise identification of the harvest location as is possible, including the abbreviation for the state or province, and country;
- The type and quantity of the shellfish, e.g., “One bushel Manila clams”;
- The following statement, in bolded, capitalized type: **“THIS TAG IS REQUIRED TO BE ATTACHED UNTIL CONTAINER IS EMPTY OR RETAGGED AND THEREAFTER KEPT ON FILE FOR 90 DAYS”**.

Raw shucked shellfish shall be obtained in containers which are:

- Non-returnable; and
- Labeled with the name, address, and certification number of the shucker/packer or re-packer of the shucked shellfish; and
- A “sell-by” date on containers less than ½ gallon in size, or a “shucked” date on containers ½ gallon or more in size.

Any shell stock, shucked or in-the-shell, not bearing this information may be subject to a hold order.

TAG AND LABEL RETENTION

The tags or labels attached to a shellfish container must be kept attached to the container until it is empty. All food service establishments must keep shellfish tags or labels on file for a minimum of 90 days. Use a record-keeping system that keeps the tags or labels in chronological order, and that allows you to correlate to the date when the shellstock is sold or served. The shellstock tagging and retention requirement is designed to help regulatory authorities trace shellstock back to its original source. If a foodborne illness outbreak occurs, the tags are required to help regulatory authorities move quickly to close the affected growing areas, or to take



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other appropriate actions to prevent additional illnesses.

DISPLAYING SHELLFISH FOR REGULAR SERVICE

Retailers may remove shellstock from the original container in which they are received, display them on drained ice, or hold them in some other display container, such as a deli cold case. A consumer may request a specified quantity of shellstock from the display ice or display container, provided:

- The source of the shellstock is identified, as required above; and
- Shellstock tags/labels are kept on record, as required above; and
- The shellstock is protected from contamination.

DISPLAYING SHELLFISH FOR SELF-SERVICE

Retailers may remove shellstock from the original container in which they are received, and re-pack them into consumer self-service containers, provided each of the following requirements is met:

- The container is plainly marked with the harvest area name, harvest date, and the original dealer's certification number, including the abbreviation for the state or province, and country, or some other coding system that can be used to link the shellstock to the information provided on the original tag/label;
- The original tags/labels are retained and recorded, as required above;
- The shellstock are protected from contamination;
- The packaging material allows air to get to the shellstock;
- Do not mix shellstock of different types, or shellstock of different lots.

PROPER ORDERING, HANDLING, AND STORAGE OF SHELLFISH

- All shellstock offered to the public, for sale or consumption, must be obtained from an approved source. This can be verified by checking the Interstate Certified Shellfish Shippers List, published by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (USFDA), and is available at <http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/seafood1.html>;
- Maintain shucked shellstock internal temperature at 41° F or less;
- Proper drainage shall be provided for iced shellstock. Do not store shellstock in standing water;
- "Sell-by" dates for packed shellfish shall not be covered over by store labels;
- Shellfish of different types and shellfish of different lots shall not be intermixed;
- Ensure good air circulation around shellstock;
- Keep shellstock clean, free of mud, with no objectionable odors;
- Live shellfish shall not be intermixed with live crustaceans (crabs, lobsters, etc.);
- Cooked shellfish, or other cooked product, is not to be intermixed with raw shellfish product or other raw product;
- Keep shellstock off of the floor, stored on clean pallets or shelves;
- Sell and serve only shellstock that is alive. Test by tapping open shells with a hard object; discard any that do not close their shells;
- Use a molluscan shell only once as a serving container.

RETAIL LIVE-HOLDING SYSTEMS

If a retail food establishment displays shellfish that are not for human consumption, then the display tank must have a sign that states the shellfish are for display only.

HACCP PLAN AND VARIANCE

Retailers operating a life support system tank to store and display shellfish that are for human consumption must include a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point Plan (HACCP) with their plan of operations, and they must obtain a variance from the Health District. The HACCP plan that ensures that:

- Water used with fish other than molluscan shellfish does not flow into the molluscan tank;
- The safety and quality of the shellfish as they were received are not compromised by the use of the tank; and
- The identity of the source of the shellstock is retained.

Refer to our Variance and HACCP handouts for more information.