

Shellfish Dealer Employee Information on Food Safety and Employee Hygiene



Shellfish Safety

As an employee of a Shellfish Processor you need to be aware of key elements in the handling of shellfish regarding food safety and employee hygiene. This publication outlines four areas of shellfish processing and explains how to recognize potential safety hazards.



Employee Hygiene

Employees should report to work in a state of cleanliness, wearing clean clothing and in appropriate attire based on job duties which may include aprons, hair restraints and gloves. Aprons and gloves should be stored as to prevent contamination when not in use.

Hands should be washed before starting to work with shellfish. Wash hands between tasks, and if work is interrupted. Effective hand washing includes the backs of hands, palms, and exposed portions of the arms, between fingers and under the fingernails. Vigorously rub together the surfaces of lathered hands and arms for at least 20 seconds, thoroughly rinse with clean water. Pay particular attention to the areas under fingernails and between fingers.

Employees with an infected wound must keep it covered with a proper bandage (a dry, durable, tight-fitting impermeable barrier) and a single-use glove if the wound is on their hand.

- » Do not wear watches and jewelry during food processing.
- » Report any illness to a manager and do not work with food products while ill.
- » Employees must not eat, drink, smoke, chew gum or tobacco, or spit in any areas used for food handling, processing, storage or packaging.
- » Personal items should be stored in designated areas away from food products at all times.



Source

All shellfish must come from a harvest area that is open for harvest. To minimize risks, check tags at receipt to make sure they are legible and complete. Harvester tags should come from a licensed harvester who harvested shellstock in open and approved harvest areas within the approved harvest hours and landing times during appropriate times of year.

Dealer tags should provide a certification number that can be checked on the Interstate Certified Shellfish Shippers list and provide legible and complete information regarding open and approved harvest area and dates.

Product must arrive in a clean conveyance and not be exposed to contaminants.

Shellstock tagging has a very direct role in public health protection. In the event of a shellfish-related illness, tags (in combination with records) should provide for traceability of live shellstock from the final consumer back through everyone who handled the product, to a specific growing area, harvest date, and, if possible, the person who harvested the shellstock.

Two forms are shown. The top form is a "COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA SHELLFISH HARVESTER TAG" with fields for Harvester Name, Identification #, Date, Time, Harvest Begins, Harvest Area, Type of Shellfish, and Quantity. The bottom form is a "DEALER TAG" with fields for Dealer Name, Address, Date of Harvest, and Quantity of Shellfish. Both forms include instructions and a "KEEP REFRIGERATED" label.

Check harvester and dealer tags at receipt to ensure they are legible and complete.





Equipment must be constructed of smooth, non-absorbent materials that can be washed and sanitized.

Temperature Control _____

To minimize bacterial growth and decrease the chance of illness from consuming shellfish, product received from harvesters should be in compliance with applicable VMRC regulations based on the month of harvest and deliveries from dealers should be via ice or mechanical refrigeration of 45°F. Immediately store shellfish at 45°F or less once received. Only take temperatures with thermometers that have been calibrated. Shellfish should be stored at 45°F or less so report any failures in refrigeration to management.



The three compartment sink should be used to wash, rinse and sanitize all food contact surfaces prior to use.

Equipment and Storage _____

- » All food contact surfaces should be washed, rinsed and sanitized prior to use. This includes knives, buckets, shucking boards, and any other surface which has direct contact with a food item.
- » The three compartment sink should be set up as wash, rinse, and sanitize with an approved sanitizer chemical which has been tested with a test strip to ensure proper concentration, 100ppm for chlorine and 400ppm for quaternary ammonia. Ask your employer which sanitizer chemical is being used in the facility.
- » Used disposable items must be discarded
- » Dip buckets when shucking are not permitted
- » Make sure all utensils and equipment are not sources of contamination for shellfish.
- » Shucking and ice handling equipment must be made of smooth, non-absorbent materials that can be washed and sanitized. No bare wood should be in contact with food or ice.
- » Any equipment involving the manufacture, storage or dispensing of ice should be washed, rinsed and sanitized and protected from contamination at all times in use and storage as ice is considered a food product. Do not store personal food or drinks in ice to be used for shellfish.
- » All equipment and utensils after being cleaned and sanitized should be stored to prevent contamination from dust, splash, etc.
- » While in storage shellfish should be protected from contamination from other seafood species and condensation from cooler units.

Contact Information:

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Division of Shellfish Safety**

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[http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/
environmental-health/shellfish-safety](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-health/shellfish-safety)

"By signing my name, I certify that I have read the information provided in this handout."

Printed Name

Signature

Date