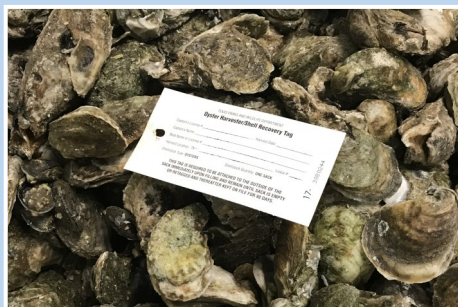


Shellfish Processing Safety, Hygiene and Sanitation

Information for Employees of
Florida Certified Shellfish Processing Facilities



Shellfish Safety

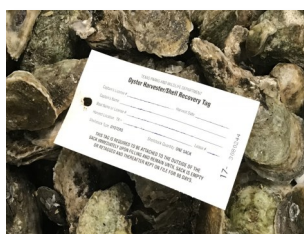
Four key elements critical to keeping shellfish products safe are:

- The **source**;
- **Temperature** control;
- Processing **equipment**; and
- **Hygiene** of handlers and processing facilities.

This publication outlines how to recognize and reduce potential hazards.



Processed raw oysters



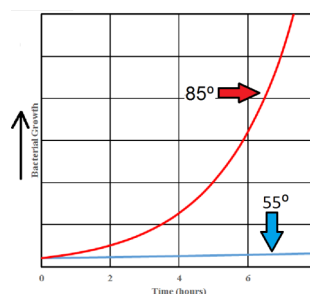
Oyster harvester tag

- **Legible and properly filled out**;
- Harvested from **open, approved areas**;
- Received within **approved harvest hours and on the same day as harvest**; and
- Received from **licensed harvesters or certified shellfish processing facilities only**.

Product must also arrive in a **clean and sanitary state**.

Temperature

If post-harvest temperatures are too high, bacteria multiply rapidly in shellfish and increase the chance of causing illness when consumed raw. Effects of shellfish-borne illnesses range from nausea and diarrhea to life-threatening conditions such as blood infections and organ failure. **To minimize bacterial growth and decrease the chance of serious illness, immediately store shellstock at 45°F or less. Do not leave product unattended in boats, vehicles, at the dock or at shucking stations.**



Bacterial growth chart

Source

Shellfish intended for raw consumption are a high-risk food due to bacteria found in the waters they inhabit. To minimize risk, **check harvester tags** to ensure they are:



Examples of shellfish processing equipment

Equipment

If not properly used, cleaned and stored, equipment can contaminate the product. Some items of concern in shellfish processing include:

Ice — is food grade and for processing purposes only.

- **Do not store food or drinks in ice or ice maker.**
- **Icemakers must be clean without rust or mold.**
- **Store scoops and shovels properly and away from contaminants. Do not store in icemakers, on floor, on top of machine or other potentially contaminated surfaces.**

Knives, buckets, and other hard surfaces.

- Shucking and ice handling equipment **must be cleaned** in a three-compartment sink using the appropriate clean, rinse and sanitization protocol.
- **Dip buckets when shucking are not permitted.**
- **Repair or dispose and replace worn, rusted, or damaged equipment.**
- **Do not step on pallets.** These must be kept clean.
- **Work attire such as aprons, gloves, and hair nets.**
- Must be **clean** prior to each use.
- Must be **stored** properly when not in use and **replaced** periodically to avoid increased risk associated with wear and tear of these items.
- Used disposable items must be **discarded**.



Florida Department of
Agriculture and Consumer Services



Three compartment sink setup

Hygiene

Hygiene is an important part of any food processing safety program. **In addition to reporting for work in a state of cleanliness, workers at certified shellfish processing facilities must:**

- **Wear clothing that includes a shirt and protective shoes when inside the facility.**
- **Wear appropriate work attire** such as aprons, gloves, and hair or beard nets.
- **Wash hands with soap and water** upon entry, after each visit to the restroom or absence from the work station, and any other times necessary to prevent product contamination.
- **Select accessories carefully.** Only plain wedding bands are permitted in processing areas.
- **Report all illnesses to your manager.** Abstain from contact with product while ill.

Additionally, **do not chew gum or have food or beverages** in the work area, and **do not use tobacco** anywhere in the facility.



Oyster shucking staff at a Florida certified shellfish processing facility

Review of Responsibility

- Check harvester tags to ensure that shellfish received have been harvested by licensed harvesters from approved, open areas during the appropriate hours.
- Maintain shellstock at 45°F or less and report any failures in refrigeration or climate control to management.
- Do not store personal food, drinks or any ice-handling equipment in ice.
- Use approved three-compartment sanitation method for cleaning equipment. Do not use dip or rinse buckets while shucking.
- Store all equipment properly.
- Wear a shirt, shoes and protective work attire such as gloves and aprons.
- Wash hands with soap and water upon entry to facility and after every absence from work station.
- Do not eat, drink or chew gum in work area. Do not use any tobacco, nicotine, or vaping products anywhere in facility.
- Refrain from wearing jewelry in work area other than plain wedding bands and stud earrings.
- Stay home from work if ill, and report illnesses to your manager.

I have reviewed this brochure and understand my responsibilities as a shellfish processor and my role in protecting consumer health.

Signature

Printed Name



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Division of Aquaculture
600 South Calhoun Street, Suite 217
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
Contact Us: (850) 617 - 7600
Email: Aqua_PPCIP@FDACS.gov
www.FDACS.gov

For more information about Shellfish Harvesting and Processing:
www.FDACS.gov/Agriculture-Industry/Aquaculture/Shellfish-Processing-Facility-Certification

For more information about an Aquaculture Certificate of Registration:
www.FDACS.gov/Agriculture-Industry/Aquaculture/Aquaculture-Certificate-of-Registration

For more information about a Fish & Wildlife Commission Saltwater Products Licensing:
MyFWC.com/license/commercial/saltwater/