

## **Delaware Shellfish Aquaculture Importation Policy**

### **DNREC Division of Fish & Wildlife**

#### **Risks associated with importation of shellfish**

- Importation of shellfish, even when tested, is not without risk. Imported shellfish can bring with them disease and non-native organisms.
  - Testing requirements seek to minimize, but cannot eliminate, risks associated with importation.
- Approval of import does not guarantee that product absolutely is, or will remain, either disease and pathogen or parasite free or that dermo will remain at low prevalence throughout growout.

#### **Before importation**

- Before any shellfish/shellfish product (larvae, seed, broodstock) is imported from outside of the State, written approval must be obtained from the Division of Fish & Wildlife.
  - The applicant must submit a request for approval of importation to the Division of Fish & Wildlife on a form supplied by the Division of Fish & Wildlife.
  - The applicant should contact the Division of Fish & Wildlife before the anticipated date of the importation to review source and testing requirements.
  - To allow for adequate evaluation and processing time, applications must be received by the Division of Fish & Wildlife a minimum of 7 calendar days prior to the requested shipment date(s).
  - The Division of Fish & Wildlife will consider an application incomplete and will not approve importation until the corresponding histopathology reports (see below) are received.
  - Approval of importation is not guaranteed.
- Division of Fish & Wildlife contact number (302) 735-2960.

#### **Shellfish Testing Policy**

- Shellfish imported into the State must be tested by a lab approved by the Division of Fish & Wildlife (Appendix A).
- A dated and detailed histology and pathology report must be submitted to the Division of Fish & Wildlife.
  - A sample of at least 60 animals must be histologically processed.
    - All findings of parasites or commensals shall be reported.
  - An individual (no composite testing) thioglycollate culture (RTFM), PCR, or qPCR analysis of tissue from at least 60 animals must be performed to test for the presence of *Perkinsus marinus* (dermo).
  - The dated pathology report will be considered a characterization of the disease state of the shellfish seed, larvae, or broodstock from the source population for 45 days from the time that the shellfish were sampled (removed from ambient water) for testing.
    - If approved, shellfish from the tested source must be transported to Delaware within 45 days of the date that the shellfish were sampled.
    - Beyond 45 days of the date that the shellfish were sampled, retesting of the population will be necessary.

Note: Should multiple aquaculturists wish to obtain shellfish from the same source shellfish population at the same time (within the 45-day period), a single histopathology report will suffice. Aquaculturists will still need to contact the Division of Fish & Wildlife and apply for separate importation permits.

- Only batches of shellfish larvae, seed, or broodstock found to have very light (under 5%) prevalence of dermo and zero prevalence of other pathogens (MSX, SSO, QPX, ROD, etc.) shall be approved for importation and introduction for aquaculture purposes.
- The importation of shellfish for use in research will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may require submission of a formal proposal.

**Appendix A. Delaware Division of Fish & Wildlife Approved\* Shellfish Testing Laboratories**

- Rutgers Haskin Shellfish Lab
- VIMS Shellfish Pathology Lab
- Roger Williams University
- Kennebec River Biosciences
- State of Connecticut, Department of Agriculture
- Stony Brook University Shellfish Lab

\* If you wish to use a laboratory that is not listed, please contact the Division of Fish & Wildlife to discuss the request.