

## **Delaware Inland Bays Shellfish Aquaculture Import Policy**

### **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, disease and pathogen or parasite free 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 Department.
  - The applicant must submit a request for approval of importation to the Division of Fish & Wildlife on a form supplied by the Department.
  - 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 Department a minimum of 30 days prior to the requested shipment date(s).
  - The Department will consider an application incomplete and will not issue 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 for aquaculture purposes must be tested by a lab approved by the Division of Fish & Wildlife (Appendix).
- A dated and detailed histology and pathology report must be submitted to the Division.
  - A sample of 60 animals must be histologically processed.
    - All findings of parasites or commensals shall be reported.
  - An individual (no composite testing) thioglycollate culture (RTFM) or qPCR analysis of tissue from 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.
    - Beyond 45 days, 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 zero prevalence of pathogens (dermo, 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. 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.