

SW Aquaculture Network (SWAN) Conference, 28th Oct. 2021 Seafish Aquaculture Handout

Who is Seafish?

Seafish¹ is a non-departmental public body supporting the £10 billion seafood sector in the UK to help it thrive. We work in partnership with businesses, Government and other stakeholders with an interest in seafood to make progress together. We are funded by a levy on the first sale of seafood in the UK which we use to provide our stakeholders with research, campaigns, business support tools, information networks and training.

How do we engage with the aquaculture sector?

Seafish has a long history of aquaculture engagement however, in 2015 our standalone domestic aquaculture programme was created to support the strategic development of UK farmed seafood. Through this work programme, we engage with stakeholders to identify key industry issues and opportunities. As outlined in our current Corporate and Annual Plans², Seafish is “*supporting growth in aquaculture as a key source of supply*”.

What are we currently working on?

Seafish, working across our five industry-identified Challenges³, are engaging with an increasing range of aquaculture issues. Below is just a flavour of our current activities and resources:

Assisting knowledge sharing and effective collaboration through...

- Bringing together stakeholders at our Aquaculture Common Issues Group (ACIG) meetings, and through our monthly ACIG e-newsletter providing the latest news, events and information⁴.
- Provision of expert guidance to external, pan-UK projects such as Aquaculture Research Collaborative Research Hub UK, as well as to devolved administration focused initiatives, such as Seafood 2040's⁵ English Aquaculture Leadership Group. As for aquaculture in the SW, we are supporters of, and collaborators with, the Dorset Coastal Forum, it's Mariculture Governance Group, and SWAN.

Providing accurate, accessible information to support change and promote awareness by...

- Commissioning reviews and reports to increase understanding of aquaculture challenges and opportunities; from climate change adaptation⁶, to the ecosystem services of shellfish⁷, as well as providing extensive online resources related to bivalves and their purification⁸.
- Instigating major awareness raising campaigns such as Love Seafood – assisting consumer promotion and marketing⁹ – through to what climate change means for the seafood industry⁵.
- Offering a range of training and development courses, many pertinent to farmed bivalve handling / processing (see our ‘*Onshore Training: Shellfish Sector*’ handout).

Provide regulatory information and guidance on interpretation through...

- We help seafood businesses prepare and respond to challenges and opportunities that impact trade, including practical support to help them understand the new rules¹⁰.
- Facilitating and focusing resources to help improve shellfish production issues related to water quality, and classification (see our ‘*Water Quality, Classification, and Shellfish*’ handout).

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¹ Seafish web site - <http://www.seafish.org/> / Twitter - [@seafishUK](https://twitter.com/seafishUK)

² Who we are and what we do - <https://www.seafish.org/about-us/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/>

³ Challenge 1: Changing Landscape / 2: Enjoy Fish / 3: Safe and Skilled / 4: Good Source and Supply / 5: Deep Insight

⁴ ACIG - <https://www.seafish.org/article/aquaculture-common-issues-group>

⁵ Seafood 2040 - <https://www.seafish.org/about-us/working-locally-in-the-uk/working-with-the-seafood-industry-in-england/seafood-2040/>

⁶ CC Impacts and Adaptation - <https://www.seafish.org/insight-and-research/current-and-future-trends/climate-change-impacts-and-adaptation/>

⁷ Ecosystem Services from UK Shellfish - <https://www.seafish.org/document/?id=A181ED6F-5B49-44EC-BB3C-1CE25EFF9E1E>

⁸ Bivalve Shellfish Purification - <https://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/aquaculture-farming-seafood/bivalve-shellfish-purification/>

⁹ Love Seafood - <https://www.seafish.org/promoting-seafood/love-seafood-consumer-brand/>

¹⁰ UK exit from the EU - <https://www.seafish.org/trade-and-regulation/uk-exit-from-the-eu/>

Seafish Water Quality, Classification, and Shellfish Handout

Aquaculture water quality, classification, and shellfish

One of the key issues constraining sustainable growth and economic viability of the UK shellfish aquaculture sector is water quality, in particular the limited availability of high quality shellfish waters in many parts of the UK. This issue has become more important since the UK became a Third Country to the EU, resulting in changes for the export of live bivalve mollusc (LBM). We are working collaboratively on UK water quality issues, to help increase production of high quality shellfish¹¹.

Shellfish Stakeholder Working Group

Facilitated by Seafish and chaired by the Shellfish Association of Great Britain, the Shellfish Stakeholder Working Group (SSWG) brings together shellfish producers, regulators and researchers to work collaboratively to identify, discuss and find solutions to issues affecting UK shellfish production. The DASSHH project and the OCR Review are two major SSWG activities.

Developing an Assurance Scheme for Shellfish and Human Health (DASSHH) Project

Water quality (in terms of bacteria and viruses present), affects the incidence of microbial contamination in shellfish. Various factors influence the inter-relationship between microbial loading, shellfish flesh and water quality. Outputs from the pan-UK¹² DASSHH project, due early 2022, along with the OCR review (see below), will provide evidence on which to develop a risk-based approach for shellfish management. Enabling producers to predict, manage and intervene in reducing the risk of harvesting contaminated shellfish products more accurately. Specific DASSHH aims include:

- Improved understanding of microbial contamination and how uptake by shellfish varies with a range of potentially predictive environmental factors.
- Assessing microbial contamination risk implications post-harvest and determining if measures can be used to remedy / mitigate this risk so resulting product is safe to eat.
- Developing a risk-based management system that:
 - Complements the current classification system.
 - Enables regulators and industry to cooperate more flexibility in applying the regulations; minimising incorrect downgrading of shellfish beds, whilst ensuring public health standards.
 - Provides the shellfish industry with the ability to engage in real-time management of their harvesting operations.

Official Control Regulations (OCR) Review

Seafish has recently published the SSWG commissioned 'Review of the application of the Official Control Regulations for shellfish production as they relate to microbial contamination'¹³. It compares how different Member States implement EU regulations for site classification. It also looks at how Third Country's meet the requirements to export to the EU; a key factor in helping to address the current trade issues affecting the UK LBMs. The review outlines a series of proposals for the UK to refine how it implements the OCR requirements, and these have been prioritised by the SSWG. The FSA has reviewed its approach for dealing with above-threshold results¹⁴ – and supported by Cefas, Bangor University and Seafish – are continuing to work on implementing the remaining proposals.

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¹¹ Aquaculture water quality and classification for shellfish - <https://www.seafish.org/trade-and-regulation/regulation-in-aquaculture/aquaculture-water-quality-and-classification-for-shellfish/>

¹² Project partners are: Camel Estuary, Cornwall, and Conway and Menai East, North Wales (work being progressed by the Shellfish Centre at Bangor University); Belfast Lough in NI (work being progressed by the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute). Links have also been made with similar work in the Shetland Isles led by Seafood Shetland and Shetland Seafood Quality Control Ltd.

¹³ OCR Review - <https://www.seafish.org/document/?id=621ffa11-4943-4698-bdd4-bcf3784bdda8>

¹⁴ Introducing two new criteria for the 2021/22 annual review of site classifications:

- Results falling more than three standard deviations above the mean contamination levels will be considered anomalous and disregarded; and
- Results of 780 *E.coli*/100g flesh were disregarded for sites that are otherwise on-track to remain within Class A criteria.

Seafish Onshore Training Handout: Onshore Learning and Development Opportunities for the Shellfish Sector

Seafood Training

A skilled and safe workforce is vital to a thriving seafood industry. Seafish¹⁵ provide safety and training through several seagoing, and in partnership with the Seafood Academy¹⁶, onshore courses re-enforced with the associated resources and support for both employees and employers. Highlighted below are just some of the onshore learning and development opportunities for the shellfish sector, and those particularly pertinent to farmed bivalve handling / processing.

Bivalve Purification Operations

Seafish offer this one day, Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) accredited training course to depuration businesses across the UK.

Other Compliance Training

Food hygiene, Health and Safety (onshore) and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) training is available from Seafish approved trainers across the UK. Additionally food hygiene and Health and Safety courses can be delivered by Open Learning / Online training materials, and (Intermediate only) as a REHIS e-learning programme. Charges range from free to £300. Funding may be available to subsidise these programmes.

HACCP Planning

Seafish have published a model HACCP plan for bivalve purification businesses. The model plan shows how well designed policies and standard operation procedures can be used to manage food safety without the need for critical control points (CCPs). The Seafish model has only one (pre-despatch) Critical Control Point (CCP). Our 'Revised HACCP Plan for Bivalve Purification Operations 2019'¹⁷, gives more information.

Food Authenticity and Integrity Verification

Seafish have developed a two-day Food Authenticity and Integrity Verification training course. This challenging and advanced course is available for remote delivery via Zoom or Teams, and 50% funding is available. The course is available from October 2021.

Apprenticeships

For more information on apprenticeships for shellfish growers, depurators and merchants in please contact Polaris Learning Ltd. (Scotland), Cambrian Training (Wales) or Southern Regional College (Northern Ireland). For England please email the Onshore Training team.

Other Training Courses/Courses in Development

- Bivalve Purification Management – a one day remotely delivered course. Available late 2021.
- Principles of Fish Smoking – a one day remotely delivered course. Available from October 2021.
- Principles of Fish Quality Assessment – a half day remotely delivered course. Available for processors, mongers and fish friers.



Use the QR Code opposite via a smartphone or tablet to access this document online and the web links therein. Alternatively, visit the Seafish Onshore Training page¹⁸ / or the Seafood Academy site².

Email the Onshore Training team at onsshore@seafish.co.uk.

¹⁵ Safety and Training - <https://www.seafish.org/safety-and-training/>

¹⁶ Seafood Academy - <https://seafoodacademy.org/>

¹⁷ Revised HACCP Plan for Bivalve Purification Operations -

<https://seafoodacademy.org/pdfs/Seafish%20Notes%20on%20a%20revised%20HACCP%20plan%20for%20Bivalve%20purification%20Operations%202019%20-%20for%20distribution.pdf>

¹⁸ Seafish Onshore Training - <https://www.seafish.org/safety-and-training/onshore-training/>