

Revised Reopening Policy and Trigger Upgrades

Alissa Dragan, Supervising Environmental Analyst

CT Department of Agriculture

2024 DoAG Harvester Training

May 21, 2024

Current Reopening Policy

NSSP-MO Section II - Chapter IV. @.03 A. (5) (d) (i)

Conditionally Approved Rainfall Closures:

- The emergency situation or condition has returned to normal and **sufficient time has elapsed to allow the shellstock to reduce pathogens or poisonous or deleterious substances that may be present in the shellstock to acceptable levels.** When pathogens are of concern, **studies establishing sufficient elapsed time shall document the interval necessary for reduction of coliform levels in the shellstock to pre-closure levels.** Such coliform studies may establish criteria for reopening based on coliform levels in the water. When poisonous or deleterious substances are the concern, sampling shall establish that poisonous or deleterious substances in shellstock do not exceed FDA action levels, tolerances and/or guidance levels and/or levels that are deemed safe through risk

Current Reopening Policy

- Conditionally Approved areas close for a minimum of 7 days from the *end* of a rainfall event, with reopening **no earlier than the 8th day**.
- Closure periods extended an additional 7 days if a subsequent rainfall closure event occurs within the initial closure period.
- Water samples from all routine water monitoring stations are collected prior to the end of the 7 day closure event.
- Shellfish tissue sampling can be removed from the Management Plan when a verification study has demonstrated a direct correlation between fecal coliform concentrations in shellfish tissue and the overlying waters, and a decrease in fecal coliforms in seawater results in a corresponding decrease in the shellfish meats. Both water and shellfish tissue samples must return to pre-closure event levels within the recovery period.
- Satisfactory water samples are ≤ 14 CFU/100mL from all stations, and satisfactory shellfish tissue samples are **no more than** the number of fecal coliforms found in **background shellstock samples** and must not be **>230 MPN/100g**.
- Conditionally Approved areas may reopen after 14 days without water and tissue sampling if there have been no additional closure events

Revised Reopening Policy

- The NSSP-MO allows for studies showing sufficient time has elapsed to allow shellstock to reduce pathogens/ poisonous or deleterious substances to background levels
- Conditional Areas can reopen with both satisfactory meats and waters
- DoAG has begun studies to shorten the 7 day closure period
- Requires tissue samples from harvesters *when requested*

Trigger Upgrades

Fairfield:

- CA A 1.0" to 1.5"
- CA B 1.5' to 2.0"

West

Haven/New
Haven/East
Haven:

- 1.5" to 2.0"

In 2024, DoAG will continue to review data for other growing areas to see if additional closure triggers can increase

Questions?

alissa.dragan@ct.gov