Food Authority

Best practice - from lease to market



Keeping shellfish safe for consumers

Oysters, mussels and clams are high-risk foods because they are often eaten raw. Commercial growers and harvesters must meet the requirements of the NSW Food Regulation 2025 to help keep shellfish safe to eat.

1 Get the required licences

- Shellfish growers and harvesters in NSW, including spat farmers, must be licensed by the NSW Food Authority.
- Vehicles used to transport or distribute shellfish for sale must also be licensed.

2 Check before you harvest

Always check your harvest area is officially 'open' before harvest. You can check with:

- your local shellfish committee coordinator
- the Food Authority website
- your local estuary's notification system (e.g. flag or message bank system)
- the NSW Shellfish program team.

Don't rely solely on Food Authority SMS notifications. Harvest areas can be closed before an SMS can be issued.

3 Keep accurate records

Record in your Product Record (PR) book:

- ✓ harvest date and time
- ✓ harvest area
- ✓ salinity at time of harvest
- ✓ species collected.

Records are audited every 6 months



4 Protect shellfish after harvest

- Wash shellfish with clean water under pressure to remove mud and silt from the shells.
- Store stock in a clean, dry area protected from sunlight and heat.
- Follow mandatory storage temperatures.
- Follow additional time and temperature controls during periods of warmer water and air temperatures to reduce the risk of vibriosis.
- Remove dead stock before distribution.
- Keep domestic animals away from shellfish.

5 Depurate and store safely

Any depuration and wet storage must comply with the *NSW shellfish industry manual* and systems must be approved by the Food Authority.

Shellfish harvested from restricted areas must undergo at least **36 hours of depuration.**

6 Bag, label and test

- Use clean bags.
- Securely attach permanent labels on each.
- Shellfish that undergo depuration must be tested as per the *NSW shellfish industry manual*.
- Water used in depuration and wet storage tanks may also require testing.
- Shellfish harvested from an approved harvest area do not need testing, if the local shellfish committee is complying with the harvest area management plan testing regime.

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Learn more
Scan the QR code or visit www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/industry/shellfish