

WET STORAGE OF SHELLFISH

To protect consumers, the NSW Food Authority limits when and where shellfish can be collected for commercial harvest. The legal requirements for commercial shellfish – including safe storage after harvest, and treatment systems which can be used to cleanse (depurate) shellfish of all contaminants before being sold – are set out in Food Regulation 2010, which the Authority administers.

Wet storage

Some harvesters store shellfish in tanks of artificial seawater to keep them in a live, fresh condition and to allow them to purge any sand before being sold.

Wet storage regulations

Shellfish must be handled carefully to prevent shell damage or stress due to temperature change or harsh movement. These could stop the shellfish from filtering well, or even kill them.

The source water used in the storage tanks must be clean—either treated or collected from an approved harvest area in the open status. This will ensure that the water meets minimum microbiological requirements. Harvesters must sample the water regularly to verify the water quality (see Table 1)

Records required

Harvesters must keep records of all wet storage operations so if there is ever a food safety problem the product can be quickly traced back to the wet storage operator and the harvester.

Records can be maintained in your Product Record (PR) book, available from the Authority.

More information

Please contact the Authority if you have any queries about your licensing requirements.

- refer to the *NSW Shellfish Industry Manual* and accompanying guidelines
- visit the NSW Food Authority's website at www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au
- phone the helpline on 1300 552 406

Table 1: Water quality for wet storage

| Product | What to test | Indicator | Standard | Frequency |
|--|---|------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Wet storage source water before disinfection | Water | Faecal coliforms | ≤70 cfu/100mL | Monthly |
| Wet storage source water without disinfection (permitted from Approved harvest areas only) | Water | Faecal coliforms | ≤10 cfu/100mL | As per harvest management plan |
| Disinfected water entering wet storage tanks | Water (sample to be taken from spray bar) | Faecal coliforms | Nil cfu/100mL | Monthly |



About the NSW Food Authority: The NSW Food Authority is the government organisation that helps ensure NSW food is safe and correctly labelled. It works with consumers, industry and other government organisations to minimise food poisoning by providing information about and regulating the safe production, storage, transport, promotion and preparation of food.

Note: This information is a general summary and cannot cover all situations. Food businesses are required to comply with all of the provisions of the Food Standards Code and the *Food Act 2003* (NSW).



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