



Canadian Food
Inspection Agency

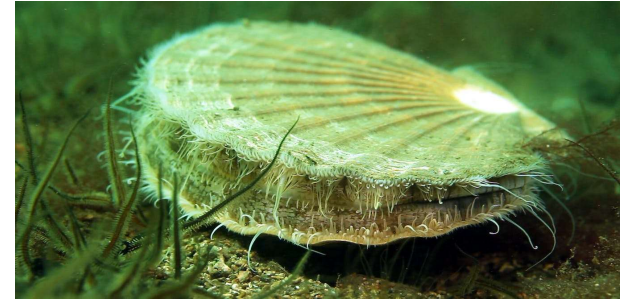
Agence canadienne
d'inspection des aliments

Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program (CSSSP)



Canada

What is the CSSP?



The Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program (CSSP) is a program administered by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) to classify, monitor and control molluscan shellfish growing areas.

The objective of the program is to provide **reasonable assurance** that **molluscan shellfish** are **safe for human consumption** by **controlling the harvesting** of all molluscs within the **tidal waters of Canada**.

Partnership Responsibilities

Canadian Food Inspection Agency

The CFIA is responsible for overall CSSP coordination, the control of handling and processing of shellfish, the marine biotoxin control program and liaising with foreign governments on matters relevant to shellfish sanitation.

Environment and Climate Change Canada

ECCC is responsible for monitoring bacteriological water quality in shellfish harvest areas, identifying and evaluating sanitary pollution sources, and recommending the classification of shellfish harvest areas.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

DFO is responsible for the management of fisheries, licensing fishing for shellfish, the enforcement of closure regulations, and opening and closing of shellfish harvest areas under the authority of the *Fisheries Act* and Regulations.

CSSP Manual

- The Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program manual is a reference document for monitoring, classifying and controlling areas where shellfish are harvested. The policies and criteria in the manual apply to all harvesting of all shellfish unless otherwise specified.
- This manual is linked to the preventive control plan (PCP) requirements in the [*Safe Food for Canadians Regulations \(SFCR\)*](#).

How do you stay up to date on closures? SHELLI

- Sign up for email notifications

The screenshot shows the SHELLI application interface. On the left, there is a form titled "Subscribe to the CSSP" with the following text: "This module allows you to subscribe to the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program's SHELLI application. You will receive automatic notifications whenever a new prohibition order is issued or revoked in your areas of interest." Below this, it states: "By subscribing to this service you consent to receiving automated emails from the CSSP about prohibition orders." There are input fields for "Email" and "Confirm email", and a blue "Next" button. On the right, there is a map of the Northumberland Strait area with a search overlay. The search overlay has a header "I want to..." and several options: "Search Management Areas", "Search Prohibition Order", "Find a place or address", "Subscribe to CSSP notifications", "Bookmark current map extent", and "Show Layers". The map shows various colored zones (red, green, yellow) and a scale bar from 0 to 40km.

The image is a red warning sign for shellfish area closures. At the top, it features the Canadian flag and the text "Fisheries and Oceans Canada" and "Pêches et Océans Canada". In the center, there is a white octagonal sign with a red border and a red 'X' over it, with illustrations of shellfish (oysters, clams, mussels) inside. To the left of the sign, the word "DANGER" is written in large white letters. To the right, the text "ZONE FERMÉE À LA RÉCOLTE DES MOLLUSQUES" is written in white. Below the sign, there are two columns of text in English and French. The English text reads: "SHELLFISH AREA CLOSED. SHELLFISH (OYSTERS, CLAMS, MUSSELS AND OTHER BIVALVE MOLLUSCS) IN THE AREA DESCRIBED BELOW ARE CONTAMINATED AND ARE NOT SAFE FOR CONSUMPTION. AREA DESCRIPTION: THIS AREA IS CURRENTLY IN A CLOSED STATUS (PROHIBITED). FISHING FOR OR CATCHING AND RETAINING ANY SHELLFISH FOR THE PURPOSES OF RELAY, DEPARATION, COMMERCIAL OR RECREATIONAL USE IS PROHIBITED BY LAW AND PERSONS DOING SO ARE SUBJECT TO PROSECUTION UNDER THE FISHERIES ACT." The French text reads: "LES MOLLUSQUES (HŪITRES, CLAMS, MOULES ET AUTRES MOLLUSQUES BIVALVES) PROVENANT DE LA ZONE DÉCRITE CI-DESSOUS SONT CONTAMINÉS ET IMPROPRES À LA CONSOMMATION. DESCRIPTION DE LA ZONE: CETTE ZONE EST PRÉSENTEMENT DANS UN ÉTAT FERMÉ (INTERDIT). IL EST INTERDIT À QUICONQUE DE PÊCHER OU DE PRENDRE ET DE GARDER TOUT MOLLUSQUE POUR LES FINS DE RÉPARCAGE, DE DÉPARATION, UTILISATION COMMERCIALE OU RÉCREATIVE. LES CONTRVENANTS SERONT PASSIBLES DE POURSUITES EN VERTU DE LA LOI SUR LES PÊCHES." At the bottom, there are two QR codes and the word "Canada" in white.

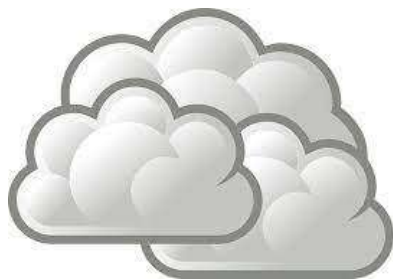
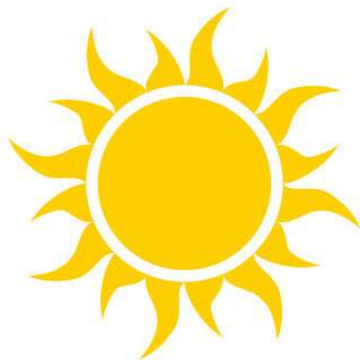
Shellfish harvest areas that are in open status can be placed in closed status when ...

- the biotoxin levels in shellfish do not meet the standard, or indicate an upward trend
- the conditions for harvesting safe shellfish in a conditionally managed area are not met:
 - a wastewater treatment plant or collection system fails or is bypassed
 - a rainfall threshold is exceeded
 - the water quality has deteriorated with a change in season
- an emergency event has occurred such as
 - a significant rainfall
 - a fuel/oil or chemical spill
- the microbiological levels in shellfish exceed CSSP guidelines

Monitoring Biotoxin Levels

- Responsibility of CFIA & conducted in Classified areas only
- Recommendation of closures or openings to DFO
- Standards enforced
 - paralytic shellfish poisoning (saxitoxin equivalents) are ≥ 80 ug/100g
 - amnesic shellfish poisoning (domoic acid) levels are ≥ 20 ug/g;
 - diarrhetic shellfish poisoning (okadaic acid and/or DTX, singly or in combination) levels are ≥ 0.20 ug/g
 - pectenotoxins levels are ≥ 0.20 ug/g

Factors that contribute to biotoxin levels



Criteria for opening a closed area due to biotoxins

- **An area may be returned to open status when three consecutive acceptable samples taken over a 14 day period** are acceptable and show a downward trend in toxicity. Consideration of adjacent area results are taken in to account when decisions are made to return a shellfish harvest area to open status.
- **Areas that are closed based on the predicted rapid rise in biotoxin levels may be opened earlier** than the standard 14-day closure if a subsequent sample or samples indicate that the biotoxin levels never reached unacceptable levels and the biotoxin levels are decreasing.

PEI at a glance...

- A total of 26 sample sites
- Approximately 750 samples collected
- Approximately 2,040 biotoxin analyses were completed in 2023
- How we collect samples: boating, shore picks, collection from registered facilities
- CFIA is continuously reviewing and updating our monitoring and sampling plans

Covehead/Brackley 2023

- This was the first biotoxin closure in PEI since 2006. This was not precautionary: the closure was triggered by above tolerance sample results.
- Historically one sample site represented both harvest tracts.
- Investigation of the harvest area showed the one sample site did not accurately reflect the conditions in both tracts.

Covehead/Brackley 2023 DSP Closure

Covehead

- Original sample site
- 55 days closed
- 8 of samples taken
- Maximum level observed:
0.20ug/g

Brackley

- Site added during investigation
- 70 days closed
- 11 of samples taken
- Maximum level observed:
0.32ug/g



Brief overview of other detections

- Portions of Bedeque Bay, Summerside Harbour, Salutation Cove, Dunk River
 - Precautionary closure was implemented due to the rapid rise of PSP levels
 - June 13 – 16
- Low level DSP detections: Boughton River, New London Bay, St. Peter's Bay, Darnley Basin, Rustico, Savage Harbour
- ASP no detections
- PSP detections: highest observed in Dunk River (above), all other detections <16ug/g

Operator responsibilities following biotoxin detection

- Have a written PCP that captures how they identify closures and outlines product distribution and traceability
- Assess risk and develop an action plan for all implicated product
 - Product harvested from last acceptable sample date to date of failed sample
 - Product harvested from date of failed sample to closure date

Shellfish Related Illnesses & Outbreaks

- **The CFIA** - will lead a CSSP food safety investigation to assess the link between shellfish from a specific shellfish harvest area, land file or lease and reported illnesses. The CFIA's food safety investigation will assess whether the illness is related to a shellfish harvest area (whole or part of), land file or lease or is the result of processor post-harvest contamination.

Key Contacts

All inquiries should start with your local inspector

- CFIA Regional Office (902) 566-7290
- CFIA Summerside Office (902) 888-4020

Other Regional Contacts

- Ashley Anderson – Fish and Shellfish Inspection Advisor Ashley.Anderson@inspection.gc.ca
- Jennifer Nickerson – Inspection Manager, Food programs Jennifer.Nickerson@inspection.gc.ca



Questions?