

NEW JERSEY SHELLFISHERIES COUNCIL		Delaware Bay Section
<i>Meeting Minutes</i>		

Meeting Name	Monthly Meeting of NJ Shellfisheries Council - Delaware Bay Section		
Meeting Date	March 26, 2013		
Meeting Time	6:00 PM		
Venue	Haskin Shellfish Research Laboratory	City	Bivalve, NJ
Attendees	General Public		

Council	State Representatives	Haskin Research Lab
Warren Hollinger, Cumberland Co.	Russell Babb, DFW Shellfisheries	David Bushek, Director
Scott Bailey, Cumberland Co. Absent	Jason Hearon, DFW Shellfisheries	Kathryn Alcox
Steven Fleetwood, Cumberland Co.	Craig Tomlin, DFW Shellfisheries	
Richard Malinowski, Salem Co.	Bruce Friedman, Marine Water	
Cape May / Salem Co. – Vacant	Calliope Alexander, NJDOH	
	Gary Wolf, FDA	
	Robert Schuster, Marine Water	

Compliance with the Sunshine Law

Notice of this meeting was posted March 22, 2013 with the Secretary of State's Office, State House, Trenton, NJ and the Bridgeton Evening News, and Daily Journal pursuant to L. 1975 c. 231.

1. New Business:

Special Meeting – 2013 Vibrio Control Plan

Mr. Friedman defined a *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* (Vp) outbreak from the National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP) as, two or more illnesses from the same shellfish harvest area. He stated that through NSSP the only way it is not considered an outbreak is if the illnesses are contributed to a post harvest contamination problem. Mr. Friedman went on to explain that when two or more illnesses are associated with one harvest area and there was no post harvest time or temperature abuse found, the harvest area has to be immediately placed in the closed status. Mr. Friedman informed the Council that in 2012, there were three illnesses attributed to Delaware Bay, Shell Rock beds, all three illnesses were reported by Maryland Department of Health. He informed the Council on the specifications on each of the three different cases. He continued by noting that all the illnesses were confirmed to be Vp by stool samples and all illnesses were attributed to the Delaware Bay, Shell Rock bed. Mr. Friedman said once the illnesses were confirmed as an outbreak he had to send a letter to the FDA explaining the circumstances and what the course of action is going to be. He went on to explain that in that letter he stated that no further action needed to be taken due to shell rock being closed because it had reached its harvest quota. Mr. Friedman also explained in that letter that in 2013 the Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring (BMWM) would reevaluate the Vp management plan.

Mr. Friedman explained that pursuant to the NJ regulations, the BMWM is required to do an annual assessment and determine if there is a risk of Vp illness with consumption of shellfish. He continued, once it is determined there is a risk, the BMWM is required to do a risk assessment, develop the Vibrio Management Plan and establishes control measures including the restrictions on the hours of harvest. Mr. Friedman stated that in order to do the risk assessment, the FDA had provided BMWM with a risk calculator. He went on to explain that the calculator is a software program where you input information and it calculates the risk of consuming of shellfish in the number of illnesses you could get from a 100,000 servings. He noted that the inputs for this risk calculator are comprised of five year averages of water temperature and air temperature taken from areas near oyster harvest areas in the Delaware Bay. He explained that according to the FDA Model, if the oysters are exposed to a temperate above 70 degrees for more then five hours the

Vibrio levels more than double. Mr. Freidman stated that the goal is to try to not expose oysters to high temperatures and cool them down as quickly as possible.

Mr. Freidman then explained that outputs required a Vp plan, when he ran the calculator for the Delaware Bay. He presented the Council with a graphic of the expected illnesses as broken down per month. Mr. Freidman showed the Council an adjusted calculator that included varying exposure times during each month. He then noted the BMWM had made a pre draft of the plan internally with input of the regular members of the SRSC, Department of Health, and Department of Shellfisheries, FDA, and BMWM. He stated that the week prior, the SRSC had met with a VP sub committee that included members of the industry as well as regulators. He also expressed an interest in making the VP sub committee a standing committee. Mr. Freidman stated that after the VP subcommittee meeting he incorporated their findings into a draft VP management plan. He noted that any comments or changes would be incorporated in the plan then it would be sent out to the VP sub committee. He stated that the VP subcommittee would be meeting again within the next week to try and finalized the plan by the first weekend in April, so that all harvesters would know the requirements for summer months of harvest.

Mr. Freidman presented the draft of the plan that will cover the Vibrio season, of June 1st to August 31st. He noted that a lot of the plan remained the same as previous years, but he also mentioned that there would be some changes. He noted that one major change was the requirement that all vehicles used to transport oysters have a refrigeration unit onboard that is pre-chilled to 45 degrees. Mr. Freidman explained that the refrigerated truck could be considered reaching refrigeration in the plan, thus allowing slightly more harvest time. He continued by saying that if a harvester wanted to put the refrigeration on their vessel, then you are not restricted by VP hours harvest to refrigeration. He also noted the necessity of recording time and temperature using a hand held laser thermometer. Lengthy discussion ensued.

The final proposed hours of harvest are as follows:

- June 1st to June 30th 8 hours to refrigeration, start of harvest 6am, all oysters must be in refrigeration at 2p.m
- July 1st to July 31st 6 hours to refrigeration, start of harvest 6am, all oysters must be in refrigeration at 12p.m
- August 1st to August 31st 6 ½ hours to refrigeration, start of harvest 6am, all oysters must be in refrigeration 12:30p.m

Councilman Hollinger noted that a harvest time of 7 hours for August was stated at a previous meeting. Mr. Shuster noted that the risk associated with a 7 hour harvest time was over 1.5 per 100,000 so they reduced the time to 6.5 hours.

A lengthy discussion ensued which included best management practices such as, pre-chilling your refrigerated truck, icing, misting, more shading, quicker chilling with better refrigeration, and reducing harvest time. Councilman Fleetwood asked Mr. Friedman to explain the process used to produce the proposed Vp plan. Mr. Friedman explained that average air and water temperatures from recorders along the bay were averaged. Once the temperatures were averaged they were used in the risk calculator. Councilman Fleetwood then asked if the proposed 1 illness in 100,000 meals had been compared to actual numbers of reported cases. Mr. Friedman stated that it is believed that 127 illnesses go unreported per year. Councilman Fleetwood stated that the industry produced over 800,000 meals with only 3 reported illnesses.

Mrs. Alexander presented the council with a PowerPoint presentation. Mrs. Alexander told the Council that she is going to send out a copy of the 2013, VP plan to all harvesters. She also provided harvesters with log books to record shell temperatures at the beginning of harvest and before the product goes into refrigeration. Mrs. Alexander stated that this will allow for the defending of product against allocations of temperature abuse. She then provided the Council and industry with a reference sheet that outline the Department of Health and Senior Services regulations that apply to oysters. Mrs. Alexander went on to explain the different diseases and risk factors associated with the Vp bacteria *Vibrio*. She also explained all of the Vp cases in New Jersey or associated with New Jersey for the 2012 calendar year. Further discussion ensued. Mr. Friedman stated that he will not require a special permit to work during Vp season. Mr. Friedman then stated that he was working on ideas that may lessen the burden of the Vp season, such as a buy boat, more quotas per boat to allow for refrigeration on the vessel, and planting on lease grounds outside of Vp time constraints. A lengthy discussion ensued on the necessity of refrigerated trucks. Councilman Fleetwood stated that there were roughly 800,000 meals served last year during *Vibrio* season and only 6 reported cases of *Vibrio*. He continued by stating that this means the industry was within its goal of 1 illness in 100,000 meals. Mr. Friedman stated that we also need to look at the under reporting of illnesses. Mr. Shuster stated that the current time temperature requirements are based on the good track record of the industry. More discussion ensued. Mr. Wolf suggested that the voting members propose changing the term outbreak to mean a number greater than 2 cases at next years ISSC meeting. Tape Ended.

Adjourn	@ PM		
The next meeting of the Council will be tentatively held on:		TBD	In the library of the Haskin Shellfish Laboratory