

NSW Shellfish Committee

Wednesday 9 May 2018

Summary of meeting outcomes

Retail Issues Observed

A case of incorrect labelling of seafood (oysters) was reported to Shellfish Committee from the NSW South Coast. This is an offence under the NSW Food Act and can attract fines and penalties. If incorrect labelling of shellfish is observed it is best to take a photograph of the suspected offence and contact the NSW Food Authority contact centre on 1300 552 406 to log a complaint. This will initiate a formal response protocol and the issue will be followed up. More information on labelling can be found here: <http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/foodsafetyandyou/food-labelling>

Environmental Sensor Network Workshops

As part of the Food Agility Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) environmental sensor network the final sensors have been put in place and are now recording data. Estuaries were chosen for this pilot study based on productivity, disease management and potential for management plan change. As a way of ensuring local programs receive the most out of this pilot study a series of workshops have been held and/or scheduled to be held. South Coast workshops were held on 22 & 23 May 2018 with the north coast workshops scheduled for 26 June 2018 in Taree and 27 June 2018 in Port Stephens. All local program members are invited to attend to gain a better understanding of how the sensors can assist to solve industry problems such as predicting oyster mortality events, condition and growth. The project is also looking at potential improvements in harvest area management. It is important that industry members attend the workshops to ensure that their views are considered.

Please contact NSW Shellfish Program on 9741 4848 to register your attendance at the coming workshops.

NSW Marine Waters Sustainable Aquaculture Strategy

The NSW Marine Waters Sustainable Aquaculture Strategy (MWSAS) aims to simplify the approvals process and promote best industry practice for marine water based aquaculture. The MWSAS applies to the whole of the NSW coast to 3 nautical miles. It does not include the estuarine environments for which the NSW Oyster Industry Sustainable Aquaculture Strategy applies. The draft MWSAS will go on exhibition for public comment 25 June – 3 August 2018. Once the document has been completed it will be reviewed by the NSW Aquaculture Steering Committee.

New Independent Technical Expert

The NSW Shellfish Committee has traditionally held a position for an independent technical expert to assist in high level technical guidance relating to shellfish biology and shellfish production. The committee welcomes Associate Professor Shauna Murray of the University of Technology Sydney to fill this position. Shauna brings with her an in-depth knowledge of phytoplankton and associated biotoxins as well as expert knowledge in laboratory and testing processes. Shauna is leading the Food Agility CRC project and industry members can meet Shauna at the workshops.

Aquaculture Research Priorities

NSW Aquaculture Research Advisory Committee (ARAC) reviews research, development and extension programs. ARAC will be reviewing the Strategic Plan at its next meeting on 5th July 2018 and is seeking industry input into this. ARAC are calling on the industry to provide input into possible research, development and extension programs. All enquiries can be made directly to Wayne O'Connor Research Leader Aquaculture 49821232. See https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/719108/ARAC-RD-and-E-Plan-2017-2022-Final.pdf

Aquaculture Administration Issues

DPI has received funding to move to an e-business format similar to a project undertaken with commercial fishers in NSW. This will allow greater access to the web (potentially via phone apps) for

transactions, accounts and production reporting. Oyster permit application forms have been amended with new entrants to the industry now required to prepare a Biosecurity Plan and a Lease Maintenance Plan. DPI are digitising permit and lease files. Non-producers and those not holding Seafood Licences have recently been sent letters from DPI seeking advice on their business intentions. To recognise the new Biosecurity Act and Regulations aquaculture permit conditions are being updated. Permit Holders who fail to lodge annual production returns on time will now receive a show cause letter instead of a reminder letter. It is a breach of the Fisheries Management Act 1996 for aquaculture permit holders to not submit production reports on time. A revised aquaculture lease allocation policy has been drafted to update processes and recognise opportunity for allocation of Class 2, 3 and 4 leases (leases other than for oyster production).

Approval to Import Tasmanian Triploid Pacific Oyster Spat

DPI has approved an application to import 100% triploid Pacific Oysters from a Tasmanian hatchery to the Clyde and Shoalhaven/Crookhaven Rivers. The NSW Chief Veterinary Officer approved an importation protocol with strict hatchery management and testing requirements prior to importation of stock to NSW. In addition, a Biosecurity Control Order will prevent the movement of any oysters from these estuaries for three years other than to the "like risk" estuaries of Georges River, Hawkesbury River and Brisbane Water. During the three year period DPI will be undertaking disease surveillance.

Remaining Meeting Dates for 2018

August 15th

November 14th

All meetings are due to be held at the NSW Food Authority Offices in Newington.