

## Guidelines for Certification Into the National Shellfish Sanitation Program Within Georgia

The Handling, Storage, Shucking, Packing, Shipping and/or sale of Shellfish (fresh or frozen) within Georgia requires certification into the National Shellfish Sanitation Program by The Georgia Department of Agriculture. Shellfish includes oysters, clams, mussels, and whole or Roe-on Scallops. Chapter 40-7-12 of the Georgia Department of Agriculture Food Division Regulations applies to operators involved in both Intrastate and Interstate commerce of molluscan shellfish products. These guidelines are intended to streamline the process towards certification, to assist the operator with understanding all the rules, regulations, and requirements, and to answer some basic questions about the certification process.

A Food Sales Establishment License is required. There is no charge for this license, but the operator should have a fixed establishment where inspections can take place. In some cases where the operator does not have a facility, the operator may be licensed as a mobile wholesale truck, in which case a food sales establishment license is not required. The certified dealer facility shall meet the basic regulatory requirements for licensing food firms detailed in Chapter 40-7-1 General Rules.

A Georgia Wholesale Fish Dealer License is required. The resident fee for this license is \$50.00 annually. OCGA 26-2-312.

A Georgia Shellfish Sanitation Certificate is required. There is no charge for this Certificate. Prior to certification a comprehensive on site inspection is conducted by state shellfish inspectors. Compliance requires no critical violations, no more than 2 key and 2 other type violations. The certificate or permit expires each year on July 31, but may be renewed by completing a comprehensive on site inspection of the facility with no critical violations, minimal carry-over or repeat violations and correction schedules that have been adequately addressed throughout the previous certification period. A numbered certificate unique to each dealer is initially issued based on the dealer type classification. Dealers should be familiar with the 4 basic type classifications: Shucker-Packer, Re-packer, Shellstock Shipper, & Re-shipper and the requirements for each type which are detailed in Chapters XI, XII, XIII, & XIV of the NSSP Model Ordinance.

The state regulations that govern a certified dealers operation are based on the NSSP Model Ordinance entitled "Guide for The Control of Molluscan Shellfish". They are **Chapter 40-7-12** Additional Regulations Applicable to the Handling, Storage, Shucking, Packing, Shipping and/or Sale of Shellfish and **Chapter 40-7-1** General Rules. Both of these Chapters may be accessed on the internet at [http://www.sos.state.ga.us/rules\\_regs.htm](http://www.sos.state.ga.us/rules_regs.htm)

Other applicable requirements are outlined and detailed in the NSSP Model Ordinance. The NSSP Model Ordinance can be accessed on the internet at [www.issc.org](http://www.issc.org) by clicking on 2005 Model Ordinance Link.

All dealers must comply with Chapter X of the NSSP Model Ordinance which requires HACCP training and a HACCP Plan for the molluscan shellfish products handled. The HACCP Plan must be reviewed and approved by the Georgia Department of Agriculture prior to obtaining the Georgia Shellfish Sanitation Certificate.

At the time of inspection for the Shellfish Sanitation Certificate, the Georgia Standardized Shellfish Inspector will determine if Georgia Shellfish tags will be issued and the number of tags issued. Either state issued Georgia Shellfish Tags or tags affixed by the Georgia Certified Dealer must be attached to each container of shellstock being transported from Georgia into another state. Firms that print their own shellfish tags must get approval from the Department for their tags prior to printing because of the required information on the tags in Chapter VIII & Chapter X of the NSSP Model Ordinance.

The record keeping system associated with the firms HACCP Plan must be reviewed and approved prior to obtaining the Georgia Shellfish Sanitation Certificate. The record keeping requirements for dealers is described in Chapter X of the NSSP Model Ordinance and is further detailed in Chapters XI, XII, XIII, & XIV of the NSSP Model Ordinance under .01 Critical Control Points in each corresponding chapter. Record Keeping includes monitoring shipments at receipt for temperatures, harvest areas, harvest dates, & dealer certification numbers. Monitoring at cold storage may be performed manually, however it is strongly recommended that continuous monitoring devices be used or some combination of visual and continuous monitoring. The dealer is required to record sales transactions in a manner that will provide trace-back information to the receiving records. In addition, sanitation control records are required for the applicable 8 basic areas of sanitation described in Chapter X of the NSSP Model Ordinance.

For assistance and other questions about the certification process and obtaining a Georgia Shellfish Sanitation Certificate contact the following Consumer Protection District Offices or the Seafood Safety Office at the following numbers.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Phone #</b>	<b>Toll Free #</b>
<b>Jesup/Coastal Georgia/District 5</b>	<b>912-427-5773</b>	<b>800-874-0258</b>
<b>Albany/District 4</b>	<b>229-430-4245</b>	<b>800-927-0112</b>
<b>Forest Park/District 2</b>	<b>404-363-7646</b>	<b>800-359-3287</b>
<b>Thomson/District 3</b>	<b>706-595-3408</b>	<b>800-786-0175</b>
<b>Oakwood/North Georgia/District 1</b>	<b>770-535-5955</b>	<b>800-473-0119</b>
<b>Atlanta/State Office</b>	<b>404-656-3621</b>	<b>800 282-5852</b>
<b>Savannah/Seafood Safety Office</b>	<b>912-963-2500</b>	

