



# SHELLFISH HEALTH ADVISORY PANEL

## MEMBERS

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The Shellfish Health Advisory Panel was established in 2015 at the East Coast Molluscan Health Workshop in Portland, ME. The 13-member panel includes shellfish pathologists, extension agents, regulators and industry members.

Tal Ben-Horin, NC State  
Carolina Borque, LA DFW  
Debbie Bouchard, Univ ME  
David Bushek, Rutgers  
Lisa Calvo, Rutgers/NJSG  
Ryan Carnegie, VIMS  
Mike Congrove, OSH  
Julie Davis, Lady's Is Oysters  
Lori Gustafson, USDA APHIS VS  
Karen Hudson, VIMS  
Marcy Nelson, ME DMR  
Bob Rheault, ECSGA  
Rebecca Thur, MD DNR

## SHELLFISH DISPOSAL DURING COVID-19

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March 17, 2020

***All actions to reintroduce harvested shellfish as well as plans to destroy harvested shellfish should be conducted in consultation with your local shellfish regulatory authority.***

We recognize that some shellfish producers now have harvested product that they are unable to find a market for due to decreased demand. Shellfish pose no known risk regarding coronavirus (COVID-19), but could pose other biosecurity risks if not handled properly. For shellfish that have been recently harvested but can no longer be marketed we provide the following guidance:

- Destroying the shellfish and upland disposal, although draconian, is the most biosecure action.
- Returning shellfish to the area of harvest in a timely manner to minimize mortality is a reasonable and safe course of action to protect product for future harvest. Short-term refrigerated dry storage may help facilitate this action as logistics are developed.
- In limited circumstances, shellfish could be placed into waters deemed to be of similar pathogen status, i.e., a like-to-like transfer. Such like-to-like assessments should be made with the expert opinion of local shellfish pathologists and regulators. The Shellfish Health Advisory Panel is willing to assist in making such determinations.
- Transfer of shellfish from waters of one state to another may not occur without approval by proper authorities of the importing State.

The Shellfish Health Advisory Panel offers this guidance in its mission to improve shellfish health management along the East and Gulf coasts of the United States. This guidance is based on the knowledge that market size shellfish likely carry pathogens present in harvest areas. This is an emergency response recommendation, not intended to set a precedent.