

DMF Vibrio Control Plan Quick Facts

According to the Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries, **critical violations** of the Vibrio Control Plan include **incomplete tags and/or lack of adequate icing**.

Tags

All shellfish harvested commercially and/or moved off-site under a propagation permit must be tagged - including seed and shellfish for personal consumption.

All containers must have individual tags with the commercial permit holder's name and state shellfishing permit number, date, **time of harvest**, time of icing (unless batch tagging for ice), harvest areas, e.g. MA CCB11, and type and quantity of shellfish.

- Times need to be exact – FDA has noted that using all zeros and fives, e.g. 9:15 and 11:15, is not precise enough.
- Harvest area should read: **MACCB_____**
- **Exceptions:**
 - o Batch tags are okay **for icing time only**. Icing time is the time the last bag goes into the ice. Batch tag gets put on the container holding the individual bags, which each have a harvest tag with time of harvest, etc. as outlined above.
 - o For grant holders, batch tags are okay **for transporting seed**. Tag should be green and state "Aquaculturally reared: To be culled" on the way off site, and "Aquaculturally reared: To be culled, for return to site," on the way back to your grant.

Logbooks and tags must be filled out before transport, except the dealer information which can be done when at the dealer. **Logbooks and tags must be legible and indelible (permanent ink)**. If using more than one logbook, label the books "Book 1 of 2" and "Book 2 of 2."

For grant holders, containers used for resubmergence must bear a resubmergence tag with the date it was resubmerged, and product must be in a specific, segregated area of your grant.

Adequate Icing

- Mesh bags containing oysters shall be completely surrounded by ice, with at least two inches of ice between the bags and the bottom and sides of the icing container, and at least three inches of ice on top of the mesh bags; OR
- Loose oysters placed into a shellfish icing container shall be completely surrounded by ice, with at least two inches of ice at the bottom and sides of the shellfish icing container, and at least three inches of ice on top of the loose oysters; OR
- Oysters held in an ice and water mixture (e.g., ice slurry or cold water dip) shall be fully submerged and the ice and water mixture must be at or below 45 °F to inhibit growth and proliferation of bacteria.

Other Important Points

- **Oysters need shading** from sun and birds while harvesting and/or processing and prior to icing.
- Oysters must be brought to the dealer **within 10 hours of harvest on the same calendar day and must already be 45°F or less when you arrive at the dealer**.

- Product must be covered during transport. Containers with product must be locked if left unaccompanied.
- All vehicles, boats and other transportation need a human waste bucket with 3" high lettering: HUMAN WASTE.
- Dogs, cats, and other pets are not allowed on boats, grants or the flats.
- For grant operations, oysters must be resubmerged for 10 days if they're out of the water for more than 2 hours. They need to be put back in a separate area of your grant and tagged with the resub date.

Footnotes

- The FDA views Wellfleet Harbor as one hydrographic area, so for example, a Vp. closure in CCB14 could trigger a closure for the entire harbor.
- DMF notes that Vp. has one of the fastest growth rates of any bacteria. Icing does not reduce the Vp. load that already exists in oysters, but it prevents further multiplication.¹
- Subtidal oysters take longer to purge Vp. than intertidal oysters.

¹ Chrissy Petitpas, PhD, Aquaculture and Vibrio Coordinator. MA Division of Marine Fisheries. Oyster Harvest, Handling, and Vibrio Control Training 2021 via <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3CxOTSuShE>.