

Connecticut Weekly AGRICULTURAL REPORT

Dannel P. Malloy, Governor
Steven K. Reviczky, Commissioner
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Connecticut Department of Agriculture
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A commercial harvester hands a bag of oysters to Department of Agriculture aquaculture scientist Kristin DeRosia-Banick in the waters of Long Island Sound off Milford during a study of how to control outbreaks of a bacterial infection that can cause gastrointestinal illness in those who eat infected shellfish.

COMBATting OYSTER INFECTION, HUMAN ILLNESS THROUGH IMPROVED HARVESTING METHODS

By Steve Jensen, Office of Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky

Aquaculture scientists from the Department of Agriculture have made significant progress in reducing the likelihood of an outbreak of a bacterial infection linked to oysters in Long Island Sound, and are continuing research into harvesting and storage methods designed to prevent illnesses from occurring.

In the summer of 2013, at least 23 cases of *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* causing severe gastrointestinal illness were connected to shellfish consumed from Connecticut waters, mainly off Westport, Norwalk, and Darien. Another 15 cases were suspected of being linked to Connecticut waters.

Previously limited to the Pacific Northwest, a specific virulent strain of the *Vibrio* bacteria has in recent years been found in the Sound and several other harvest areas along the Atlantic coast.

The illness is often associated with consumption of raw or undercooked shellfish, or with bacteria spread by cross-contamination between raw and cooked foods.

Symptoms - which usually appear 12 to 24 hours after eating contaminated shellfish and can last two to seven days - include diarrhea, stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting, headache, fever,

and chills.

Vibrio infections can be life-threatening for immune-compromised people or those with chronic liver disease. Also at greater risk are people who regularly take antacids, heart, or diabetes medication, and those who have recently had antibiotic or cancer treatments.

"Development of an effective *Vibrio* management plan is central to our agency's public health mission," Department of Agriculture Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky said. "Our staff have been working with leading scientists throughout the country to create and implement controls to protect consumers from this naturally-occurring and potentially fatal pathogen."

The most critical element of limiting post-harvest growth of *Vibrio* bacteria is to refrigerate oysters as soon as possible after being removed from the water.

A *Vibrio* Control Plan in place during the 2013 outbreak required oysters to be refrigerated within five hours of harvest, but has since been made much more stringent.

The new plan - written by the Department of Agriculture with the guidance of national experts in *Vibrio* and seafood safety - now

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PA LIVESTOCK SUMMARY

Avg Dressing

SLAUGHTER COWS:

breakers 75-80% lean	105.00	110.00
boners 80-85% lean	104.00	109.00
lean 85-90% lean	95.00	101.50

CALVES graded bull

No 1 106-118lbs	487.00	502.00
No 2 102-118lbs	485.00	491.00
No 3 100-130lbs	445.00	460.00

SLAUGHTER HEIFERS

HiCh/Prm3-4	164.50	169.00
Ch2-3	158.00	162.50
Sel1-2	150.00	157.00

SLAUGHTER STEERS.

HiCh/prm3-4	169.00	175.00
Ch2-3	164.00	168.50
Sel2-3	156.00	163.00

SLAUGHTER HOLSTEINS

HiCh/prm3-4	158.00	161.00
Ch2-3	154.00	157.00
Sel1-2	144.00	149.00

VEALERS

SLAUGHTER LAMBS: ch/pr 2-3

50-60lbs	n/a	
60-80lb	200.00	220.00
80-110lbs	197.00	220.00

SLAUGHTER EWES: good 2-3

120-150lbs	80.00	88.00
210-220lbs	80.00	84.00

Bucks

190-200.lbs	82.00	117.00
200-250lbs	68.00	80.00

SLAUGHTER GOATS: Sel.1, by head, est.

20-40lb	n/a	n/a
40-60lb	132.00	157.00
50-60lb	n/a	
60-80lb	168.00	180.00
80-100	170.00	197.00
Nannies/Does: 120-130lbs	167.00	192.00
130-150lbs	157.00	192.00
Bucks/Billies: 150-160lbs	240.00	240.00
150-160lbs	n/a	

NEW HOLLAND, PA, HOG AUCTION

Sold by actual weights; prices quoted by hundred wt.

		Low	High
48-52	200-400 lbs	62.00	68.00
	300-350 lbs	n/a	
52-56	200-400 lbs	68.00	76.00
Sows, US1-3	300-500 lbs	70.00	74.50
	500-700 lbs	74.00	76.00
Boars	400-800 lbs	35.00	40.00

**WHOLESALE FRUITS & VEGETABLES
NEW ENGLAND GROWN**

	LOW	HIGH
SQUASH, BUTTERCUP, 1 1/9	13.00	15.00
CIDER 4/1GAL	17.00	18.00
CIDER 9/1/2 GAL	20.00	20.00
RADISHES, 24'S	14.00	14.00
CRANBERRIES, 24/12OZ	32.00	32.00
POTATOES, 10LB	2.40	2.50
BEAN SPROUTS, 10LB	4.50	6.00
POTATOES, RUSSET 50IB	10.00	12.00
POTATOES, RD WHITE 50IB	10.00	10.00
CABBAGE, GREEN, BOX	9.00	10.00
SQUASH, ACORN, 1 1/9	13.00	15.00
CABBAGE RED, 50LB, BOX	11.00	12.00
BROCCOLI, 20 IB	15.00	17.00
SQUASH, BUTTERNUT, 1 1/9	13.00	15.00
SQUASH, SPAGHETTI, 1 1/9	18.00	20.00
TURNIP, WHITE CAP, 1 1/9	27.00	27.00
PARSNIPS, 25LB	24.00	24.00
PARSNIPS, 18-11B	24.00	24.00
TOMATOES, 10IB XLG	26.00	30.00
APPLE, MCINTOSH, US#1, 120CT	17.00	19.00
APPLE, MCINTOSH, 96CT FCY	19.00	19.00
APPLE, MCINTOSH, 80 CT FCY	20.00	20.00
APPLE, MCINTOSH, 88CT FCY	20.00	20.00
APPLE, GALA, 80CT, XFCY	24.00	28.00
HONEYCRISP, 72CT, XFCY	45.00	45.00
APPLE, MCINTOSH, 12/3	17.00	18.00
PEAR, BOSCH, 4/5BU	26.00	26.00
APPLE, CORT, 120CT, FCY	19.00	19.00
APPLE, MACOUN, 100CTX, FCY	26.00	28.00

BOSTON WHOLESALE CUT FLOWERS

AMRNTUS, PR BNCH, LNG	12.50	12.50
GARDENIA, PR BLOOM	5.00	5.50
GERBERA, PR STEM, LNG	1.20	1.30
LILIES, 2-3 BLMS, ASIATIC, LNG	15.00	17.50
LISNTHUS, BNCHED 10'S, LNG	16.50	18.50
SNAPDRAGN, BUNCHED 10'S	12.50	13.50
SUNFLOWER, BNCHED 5'S, LNG	6.50	7.50

WHOLESALE TURKEYWHOLE BODY, 10/31/14
CENTS PER LB./AVG**US GRADE A FROZEN**

8-16 LB (HEN)	118.71
16-24 LB (TOM)	121.30

US GRADE A FRESH

8-16 LB (HEN)	135.95
16-24 LB (TOM)	136.09

MIDDLESEX LIVESTOCK AUCTION

Middlefield, CT, Nov. 10, 2014

	Low	High
Bob Calves:		
45-60 lbs.	65.00	70.00
61-75 lbs.	125.00	150.00
76-90 lbs.	300.00	305.00
91-105 lbs.	310.00	320.00
106 lbs. & up	325.00	330.00
Farm Calves	340.00	380.00
Starter Calves	50.00	55.00
Veal Calves	130.00	185.00
Open Heifers	125.00	170.00
Beef Heifers	120.00	130.00
Feeder Steers	145.00	165.00
Beef Steers	125.00	153.00
Stock Bulls	115.00	155.00
Beef Bulls	125.00	136.00
Replacement Cows	n/a	n/a
Replacement Heifers	n/a	n/a
Boars	n/a	n/a
Sows	n/a	n/a
Butcher Hogs	n/a	n/a
Feeder Pigs	10 at	50.00
Sheep	95.00	205.00
Lambs	85.00	225.00
Goats each	85.00	280.00
Kid Goats	75.00	140.00
Canners	up to	111.00
Cutters	112.00	116.00
Utility Grade Cows	117.00	120.00
Rabbits each	5.00	30.00
Chickens each	4.00	48.00
Ducks each	2.00	11.00

NORTHEAST EGG PRICES USDAPer doz. Grade A and Grade A white
in cartons to retailers (volume buyers)

XTRA LARGE	1.24	1.28
LARGE	1.23	1.27
MEDIUM	1.08	1.10

NEW ENGLAND SHELL EGGSPer doz. Grade A brown in
carton delivered store door. (Range)

XTRA LARGE	1.61	1.71
LARGE	1.58	1.68
MEDIUM	1.26	1.36

PA FEEDER PIG SUMMARY

US # 1&2		
15-20lb	n/a	
20-40lb	195.00	235.00
40-60lb	150.00	175.00
60-120lb	n/a	

FOR SALE

1-R. Blumenthal & Donahue is now Connecticut's first independent NATIONWIDE Agri-Business Insurance Agency. Christmas tree growers, beekeepers, sheep breeders, organic farmers and all others, call us for all your insurance needs. 800-554-8049 or: www.bludon.com

2-R. Farm, homeowner and commercial insurance—we do it all. Call Blumenthal & Donahue 800-554-8049 or www.bludon.com

3-R. Gallagher electric fencing for farms, horses, deer control, gardens, & beehives. Sonpal's Power Fence 860-491-2290.

4-R. Packaging for egg sales. New egg cartons, flats, egg cases, 30 doz and 15 doz. Polinsky Farm 860-376-2227.

5-R. Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance Program, endorsed by the CT Farm Bureau, save up to 23% on your farm insurance and get better protection. References available from satisfied farmers. Call Marci today at 203-444-6553.

112-R. 2011 Greenhouse 25 X 60, Furnace, Roth Oil Tank, Fans, Micro Gro, Poly Gal Ends Doors, roll up sides, Sodium lights, Benches, \$6,500. 203-233-9677. Photos available. Martymonroegardens@gmail.com.

117-R. Rough sawn hemlock and white pine lumber, great for fall time repairs and new construction. Also, year end inventory bargains on air dried oak and mixed hardwood lumber sold as units of approx. 500 board feet each. We welcome your custom orders to be sawn. Hinman Lumber, Burlington, CT 860-673-9170.

120-R. Christmas Greens, wreaths and roping, many sizes and varieties. Samples gladly shown. We deliver. 203-457-1344.

122-R. Dual Dump Wagon Model 1200, works good, \$1,500. JD 2940 with turbo, \$10,500. JD 6310 4X4 with 740 loader, \$24,000. JD 530, \$5,000. New 11 ft Pequea Rake, \$6,500. NH 1465 haybine, \$8,500. Balers, Rake and Tedders. 203-530-4953.

135-R. Connecticut Grown Potatoes, Wholesale in Bulk Bins. 860-644-1454.

142-R. Goats, Kiko/Savanna cross. Bucks, 8 months old. 860-537-1974.

143-R. Bishop's Orchards - Application Development/Management specialist. Maintain/develop applications: MS Access, MS SQL Server and Excel; help Marketing Director and managers with data mining for electronic campaigns and meet our mission/goals. <http://newhaven.craigslist.org/sof/4731214135.html> reply to: marketjobs@bishopsorchards.com

144-R. 4 – Sundair 190,000 BTU oil fired heaters. Used only 6 seasons. Set up for under-bench heating with 24" poly tube. List \$2,350, asking \$900 each. All work fine –replaced with propane heaters. Also: 42" two speed slant-wall exhaust fan with shutter and 45" and 36" motorized intake louvers - \$600. Pallet forks – had been on a John Deere 4020 loader - \$350. Rear weight box off John Deere tractor 3 point hitch, like new - \$200. Delivery available. 860-974-0045.

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MISCELLANEOUS

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130-R. Fitch Fibers - Bozrah, CT. Custom fiber processing. 860-222-3119. www.fitchfibers.com

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143-R. Bishop's Orchards - Application Development/Management specialist. Maintain/develop applications: MS Access, MS SQL Server and Excel; help Marketing Director and managers with data mining for electronic campaigns and meet our mission/goals. <http://newhaven.craigslist.org/sof/4731214135.html> reply to: marketjobs@bishopsorchards.com

IMPROVED HARVESTING TECHNIQUES PRODUCING HEALTHIER, SAFER OYSTERS*(Continued from Page 1)*

mandates that oysters taken from the outbreak area be cooled to an internal temperature of 50°F on board the boat within one hour of harvest.

Experts were brought to Connecticut by the agriculture department in late 2013 to explain the science and rationale behind the plan to the shellfishing industry, and visited oyster producers to offer specific guidance on adapting their operation to it.

The regulation applies only to oysters taken from the waters off Westport, Norwalk, and Darien where the 2013 outbreak was concentrated.

There are six shellfishing companies working in the area who were able to achieve rapid cooling of oysters at an unprecedented scale.

A number of companies are using an on-vessel ice slurry method to cool oysters to an internal temperature of 50°F in ten minutes or less. The oysters are then stored on ice in insulated totes.

Analysts from the aquaculture bureau can track the internal temperature of the oyster as it moves through the cooling process with the use of a "data logger" – a dime-sized disk that is inserted into the oyster before the shell is secured closed with a plastic zip-tie.

Growing areas in Connecticut not linked to an outbreak were allowed to remain under the 5-hour harvest-to-refrigeration rule during 2014.

Several oyster producers outside the outbreak area, however, have voluntarily stepped up their refrigeration protocols by using combinations of on-vessel mechanical refrigeration, ice, and ice slurry to achieve faster than required cooling of oysters.

Throughout 2014, there have been no confirmed cases of Vibrio illness attributed to Connecticut shellfish, and only sporadic reports of any suspected cases.

There were a number of illness reports in surrounding states in late summer, and New York and Massachusetts authorities reported several Vibrio cases in which Connecticut was cited as one of a number of possible source states.

On Sept. 3, the Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries enacted a precautionary closure of Katama Bay in Edgartown, Martha's Vineyard due to Vibrio illnesses tied to oysters harvested there.

New York's Dept. of Environmental Conservation enacted an emergency closure of a shellfish growing area in the town of Huntington on Sept. 5, due to documented Vibrio illnesses.

Overall, the number of reported Vibrio illnesses across the Northeast at this time is low compared to recent years.

Scientists suspect one reason may be that water temperatures were significantly lower than normal early in the summer, which was unusually temperate.

"There may be some other factors at work here, but it seems likely that the combination of favorable environmental conditions and enhanced Vibrio controls are contributing to the reduction in reported illness," said Kristin DeRosia-Banick, an environmental analyst with the state aquaculture bureau.

DeRosia-Banick is currently participating in three grant-funded research projects aimed at further developing and refining oyster monitoring, harvesting and storage methods to predict and combat Vibrio outbreaks.

The aquaculture bureau is required to perform an annual Vibrio risk evaluation under the National Shellfish Sanitation Program.

The evaluation considers environmental factors such as salinity, water and air temperature, the number of Vibrio cases confirmed in the state, as well as the harvesting techniques used in the area.

If the evaluation determines that the risk of Vibrio is reasonably likely to occur, or if an outbreak occurred within the past five years, the state is required to implement a Vibrio Control Plan for the area.

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IMPROVED HARVESTING TECHNIQUES PRODUCING HEALTHIER, SAFER OYSTERS

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Also, the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference - a national cooperative organization composed of shellfish harvesters, state regulators, and the FDA—requires the state to collect additional data on the amount of shellfish harvested in order to assess the risk of illness per serving

Such “landing” information was previously not supplied by the shellfish industry.

The agriculture department has been holding annual meetings with shellfish companies to explain the findings of the risk evaluation and the requirements of the oyster-cooling controls.

“We have been very open with the industry about why these new regulations and harvesting techniques are needed,” said David Carey, Director of the Bureau of Aquaculture. “I am confident that this effort will continue to produce an increase in healthier oysters and in public confidence that Connecticut-raised shellfish are both delicious and safe to eat.”



Above, an on-board bucket of ice slurry used to rapidly cool oysters after harvesting—a vital step in preventing *Vibrio* infection.

Far left, a dime-sized “data logger” that is inserted into an oyster to track its temperature as it cools.

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