

National Shellfish Sanitation Program Historic Milestones

100

YEARS



LATE 1800's -
EARLY 1900's

1

Shellfish demand rose in America's growing cities, increasing the harvesting and shipping of shellfish throughout the U.S.

WINTER
1924-1925

2

A typhoid fever outbreak, traced to sewage-polluted oysters, killed 150 people. As a result, states sought stronger public health controls over shellfish.

FEBRUARY
1925

3

As a result of the typhoid outbreak, The National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP) was born! At their inaugural conference, representatives from federal & state agencies, as well as industry, recommended resolutions for controlling foodborne illness associated with consuming raw shellfish.

SEPTEMBER
1954

4

The 1st National Shellfish Sanitation Workshop was held in Washington, D.C. It focused on the practices and regulations surrounding the safety of shellfish in the U.S.

SEPTEMBER
1982

5

The Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC) was established, composed of State shellfish regulatory officials, industry representatives, the FDA, and the National Marine Fisheries Service.

MARCH
1984

6

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) formalized the relationship between the FDA and the ISSC. The MOU also established the ISSC as a Federal-State-Industry cooperative body.

1990's -
2010's

7

With FDA concurrence, the ISSC added new public health controls to the NSSP's shellfish safety guide. These included harvest and temperature control requirements and the updating of technologies used in reducing pathogens in shellfish.

2025

8

NSSP celebrates its 100th anniversary! 38 States, the District of Columbia, six foreign countries, three federal partners and industry currently participate in the NSSP.



100

YEARS

SHELLFISH SAFETY



WHO IS AT RISK?
Most healthy individuals are not at risk for *Salmonella* infections. Individuals with any of the conditions listed below are in a high-risk category:

- Liver disease
- Alcoholism
- Diabetes
- AIDS or HIV infection
- Gastric disorders
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Cancer (including lymphoma, leukemia, and breast cancer)
- Hemochromatosis / hemolytic anemia (abnormal iron metabolism)
- Steroid dependency (as used for certain diseases like asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, etc.)
- Any disease or medical treatment which results in a compromised immune system

Older adults are more likely to have one or more of the above conditions and should be aware of their health status before eating raw oysters or clams.

TIPS FOR COOKING OYSTERS & CLAMS IN THE SHELL

- Boil live oysters in boiling water for 3 to 5 minutes after shells open. Use a timer.
- Do not eat too many oysters in the same pot because the ones in the middle get overcooked.
- Discard any oysters that do not open during cooking.
- Steam live oysters 4 to 9 minutes in a steamer that is already steaming.
- Boil or simmer for at least 3 minutes or until edges curl.
- Fry in oil for at least 3 minutes at 375° F.
- Broil 3 inches from heat for 3 minutes.
- Bake for 10 minutes at 450° F.

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