



Contact us: info@rssbp.org • rssbp.org

REGIONAL SHELLFISH SEED BIOSECURITY PROGRAM

A collaboration of Industry, Scientists, Regulators, and Extension using the best available science to minimize risks associated with interstate seed transfers of bivalve shellfish

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Shellfish disease introduction is a concern for shellfish farmers, fishers, and resource managers worldwide. At the center of the rapidly expanding shellfish culture footprint is the hatchery production of seed. Interstate seed transfers, crucial for industry growth, are currently regulated by individual states, but shellfish disease distributions do not follow state boundaries. The purpose of the RSSBP is to facilitate the process for permitting interstate commerce of biosecure bivalve shellfish seed and larvae being sold directly out of hatchery facilities. The RSSBP Core Elements provide a science-based pathway to improved biosecurity.

CORE ELEMENTS

REGIONAL SHELLFISH HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

A team of molluscan scientists/pathologists, State regulators, extension personnel and industry members to support the RSSBP and relevant stakeholders by providing science-based advice on shellfish transfers and overseeing the hatchery certification/compliance process.

REGIONAL NETWORK OF SHELLFISH PATHOLOGISTS

A team of experts to improve the perspective on disease distributions and risk, expand surveillance activities in areas where data are lacking, and ensure proficiency in diagnosis to support a growing aquaculture industry.

INTERACTIVE SHELLFISH DISEASE DATABASE MAPPING TOOL

Provides science-based information on the distribution and abundance of shellfish pathogens along the East Coast of the United States in a manner that allows informed decisions regarding the risks of spreading or exacerbating disease from shellfish transfers.

HATCHERY COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

Hatchery products pose the lowest disease risk due to their young age, especially those only exposed to filtered water. Starting here, the Program outlines a voluntary compliance process for hatcheries to improve and validate biosecurity, reducing the need for individual batch disease certifications. State participation may require changing laws, policies or other regulations before taking advantage of this Program.



RSSBP TOOLS



rssbp.org

WE PROVIDE TOOLS TO:

- Evaluate and reduce risks of transfers
- Inform decision making regarding interstate seed transfer
- Enhance biosecurity hatchery to farm
- Facilitate commerce



FOR GROWERS

Use the shellfish disease mapper tool to compare pathogen occurrences between two locations and make informed decisions on seed sourcing. Use <https://rssbp.org/resources/> to find RSSBP-compliant hatcheries as a potential place to source seed.



FOR HATCHERIES

Consider becoming an RSSBP-compliant facility <https://rssbp.org/hatchery-certification-program/>.

Hatcheries (1) demonstrate they are following the RSSBP best management practices (BMPs) via an independent audit, and choose which products to make compliant which requires (2) documenting those practices work through a continuing history of clean health evaluations (at least three years of two samplings per year during the production season). BMPs focus on separating ambient water from filtered or treated water, something many facilities already do. Existing batch certifications may be used to meet health standards.



FOR REGULATORS

Participate in a number of ways such as using the disease database tool to understand disease distributions relevant to transfer requests, streamlining your permit reviews by recognizing RSSBP-compliant hatcheries, or seeking advice from the Regional Shellfish Health Advisory Council.

USDA PHOTO