

Traceability Best Practices

Recordkeeping, tagging, and statistical reporting are the key elements for traceability required by all Shellfish Aquaculture (AQSF) licence holders. The requirements are described in the [DFO Shellfish Aquaculture Conditions of Licence \(CoL\)](#) and the [DFO How Farmed Shellfish Products are Traced Infographic](#). Traceability allows government regulators to investigate outbreaks of food illness and helps ensure only legally harvested product enters the marketplace. Recordkeeping enables traceability of all movement of shellfish from seeding to harvest and consumption.



Best Practices for Recordkeeping (AQSF):

Recordkeeping is required for any movement of shellfish onto or off any licensed shellfish area. The requirements for recordkeeping are in [DFO CoL section 15](#) and the [DFO Shellfish Movement Infographic](#). Three useful resources are the AQSF Spreadsheet, which is electronic and sortable with all the fields from CoL section 15, a PDF for hardcopy records, and the [DFO AQSF Guidance document](#).

These records must be:

- Available upon request by a Fishery Officer.
- Available in an electronic and sortable format within 24 hours if requested.

Commonly Found Deficiencies:

- Missing information in records, most commonly:
 - Activity Codes
 - Number of Containers
 - Container Type
 - Product Weight or Quantity of Harvested Product Accepted at a CFIA Licensed Facility
 - Source of Shellfish
 - Destination of Shellfish
 - Water Classification
- Not using the correct terms or codes:
 - AQSF # - some licence holders would put their DFO shellfish aquaculture licence number rather than the four-digit Facility Reference Number.
 - Activity Code – some licence holders create a Maintenance Activity Code which is not one of the Activity Codes in CoLs (They grouped Harvest Activity Code with their Maintenance Code making it difficult to determine how much product was harvested).
 - Container Code – licence holders made up their own codes for containers
 - Water Classification of Source – some licence holders used terminology like clear or open instead of the correct wording (Approved, Restricted, etc.)

This document is an unofficial summary of the Shellfish Aquaculture Conditions of Licence prepared by the British Columbia Shellfish Growers Association.

If you are a BCSGA member and would like support with your product traceability, please email or call Malcolm Cowan: office@bcsga.ca 250-207-4110.

- Licence holder's records do not match what was submitted in their AASRs:
 - Source of Shellfish
 - Destination of Shellfish
 - Weight of Product
 - Licence holder records have no harvest or production reported, however, there are market sales reported in their AASRs.
- Units of measure used in records are unclear. Unsure if the licence holder meant dozens, individuals, size of product, gallons, kilograms or pounds.
- Records did not include all transfers (Example: a transfer from a hatchery to a shellfish aquaculture facility for a few weeks then transferred to another shellfish aquaculture facility for grow-out and then the records only have the transfer from the hatchery to the second shellfish aquaculture facility).



How to use the AQSF Spreadsheet:

The [AQSF Spreadsheet](#) required elements are in a tab called Guidance and the explanation on how to fill the spread sheet are in the [DFO AQSF Guidance PDF](#). Refer to the CoL section 15 for the required information.

- If you use a hardcopy datasheet on your farm, that information should be added to the [AQSF Spreadsheet](#) at the end of each day.

Each time you move shellfish on or off your licensed facility, (importations, introductions, transfers, harvests, wet storage, or relay) you should fill a row in the spreadsheet.

- Many columns are simple to fill and won't need to be changed often between entries such as Licence Holder Name, Address, BC Landfile Number, PFMA, and Container Type.
- Refer to the descriptions of all column headers in the [DFO AQSF Guidance PDF](#) for instructions.
- Within 14 days of completion of harvest, the far-right section in grey about the processor information must be completed which includes the date and the amount of product.



BCSGA Recommendations for Recordkeeping:

- Familiarize yourself with the CoL requirements, Excel operation and the [AQSF Spreadsheet](#).
- Reach out to the BCSGA for support with recordkeeping.
- Record information in the required field and fill the Excel sheet daily.

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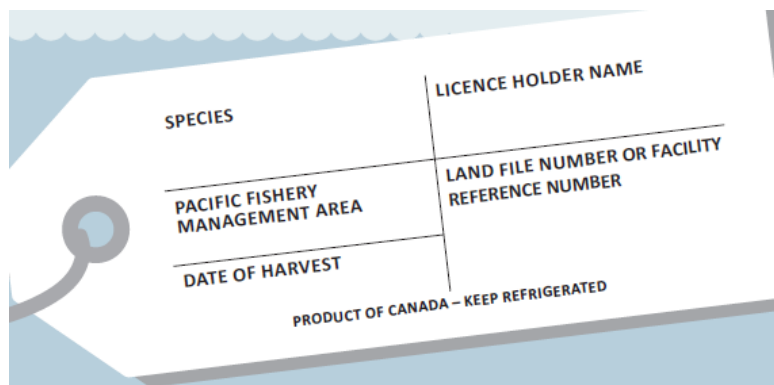


Best Practices for Tagging:

The DFO tagging requirements for shellfish aquaculture license holders are in the [DFO CoL section 12](#) and the [Tagging Infographic](#).

What to Do:

- Use waterproof tags and water-resistant ink.
- Include all minimum required information (see example above).
- Secure to all totes, bags, etc. before leaving the licensed area.
- Make sure that each container has its own tag (i.e., do not only tag a tote full of smaller bags).



Commonly Found Deficiencies:

- Securing tags at the dock or offload area, not prior to leaving the licensed area.
- Using flagging tape instead of waterproof tags.
- Tags have missing information or are not filled in.
- Only larger containers (not the smaller containers within) are tagged (i.e., only a tote is tagged, but it is filled with untagged bags).



Annual Aquaculture Statistical Report (AASR):

The description of requirements for submission of the AASR can be found in the [DFO CoL section 16](#) and a sample form is in the [DFO CoL Appendix 8](#). Your completed AASR must be emailed before January 25th of each year with all information from the previous calendar year. The completed pdf must be emailed to fishstats@dfo-mpo.gc.ca or DFO.PACAASR-RSAAPAC.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca. The data from all AASRs is used for several purposes, including being summarized into [annual aquaculture production statistics for Statistics Canada and the Province of British Columbia](#).

Required Information from the previous calendar year for the AASR:

- Total sales quantity and value of each species (units must match units used in records kept for the facility).
- The licensed CFIA Processing facility who you brought or sold the product to.
- Sales for restocking or on growing.
- All introductions and transfer to licensed shellfish area.
- Subtidal on-bottom seeding and proof of purchase for geoduck and horse clams.
- Your current stock.

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Commonly Found Deficiencies:

- Form is illegible or not completed electronic.
- Form is incomplete (all sections must be filled out or indicating “N”).
- Form is incorrect (wrong form, wrong year identified, wrong facility).
- Form is a scanned copy of a printed document (not the original pdf fillable form).
- Species is not filled out or incompletely filled out (i.e., “x-small “instead of Pacific Oyster, “Clam” instead of “Manila Clam”).
- Inconsistencies in the “Sales for Market Section” (i.e., if the quantity or weight is huge but dollar value is low or vice versa, low quantity of species but high value).
- Product is identified as being Harvest for Market Sales, but no Processing information is provided or a processor is indicated, with no sales.
- Transfers to the licensed facility listed in the “Introductions and Transfers” section are incomplete or absent (often purpose of transfer is not indicated), or do not align with transfers recorded from source facility or location.
- Transfers of non-geoduck species are listed in the “Subtidal Shellfish Seeding” section, instead of section for In-Zone Transfers Information.



BCSGA Recommendations for AASR:

- Keep all receipts from processors in chronological order within a binder.
- Use your product movement records for the market sales information (processors and quantities).
- Start preparing the AASR in early January and reach out for support.

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