

13 July 2018

Reference: Update 21/ 17-18

To all interested parties:

Updated Classifications of the Bivalve Mollusc Production Areas in England & Wales for 2017-18

The Food Standards Agency wishes to notify you of the following update to the classifications of bivalve mollusc production areas:

Upgrade

West Mersea – Mersea Flats West (*C. gigas* and *O. edulis*) B13AA

Earlier in the year, the data for this class B-LT bed showed that this site met with criteria for upgrade to class A. The rolling one-year compliance with 230 remains at 100% (13 samples) and the three-year compliance is 91.9% (37 samples). There have been no results above 700 in the last three years. There is a large continuous sewage discharge (West Mersea STW Outfall) within the zone (the RMP is located at the outfall but the discharge is UV treated and so generates a low bacterial loading). There have been historic norovirus outbreaks associated with this area, and as such this site had retained class B in the past, despite results meeting with class A criteria. After discussions with the local authority, and continued good results during the year, this site is being upgraded to class A.

Downgrades

Thames – Southend Flats (*Mytilus* spp.) B16AX

This bed (represented by monitoring at Southend Leisure Centre) was upgraded from class C to B in April 2018. Since this upgrade, there have been four results exceeding 4,600, triggering a possible downgrade (7,900 on 22/03/2018, 22,000 on 23/04/2018, 4,900 on 21/05/2018 and 13,000 on 05/06/2018). Investigations into the high results have not found any grounds for discounting them. The current one-year compliance with 4,600 is now very low at 66.7% (12 samples) and the rolling three-year compliance is 80% (35 samples). There is no clear seasonal trend at present. Therefore this site is being downgraded to class C. Although there is currently no commercial harvesting, the Local Authority would like to continue with monthly sampling as part of their usual sampling run and retain the classified status.

Lune – Pilling Sands (*C. edule*) B066W

A possible downgrade was issued for this site in September 2017 following results of 13,000 on 25/07/2017, 4,900 on 22/08/2017 and 17,000 on 12/09/2017. Due to a low number of samples

and the fact that one of the failures was only just above 4,600, Class B note 4 was retained at that point, and the site has been kept under review since. The Local Authority has been carrying out additional sampling since March (twice a month) and compliance had been improving with no further failures of the 4,600 threshold. However, there has now been a result of 7,000 on 05/06/2018 triggering another possible downgrade. Compliance with 4,600 is now very low at 75% over the last year (16 samples) and 83.3% over the last three years (24 samples). There has been insufficient evidence from investigations to meet the criteria to waive any of these results. Due to the low number of samples (due to a prior declassification and some missed samples), there is not enough data to assess a seasonal classification. This site is therefore now downgraded to class C.

Declassifications

Chichester Harbour – Northney (*C. edule* and *Tapes* spp.) B018N

This site returned an action state result (160,000) on 12/07/2017 and was subsequently downgraded to class C. A temporary closure was implemented and has remained in place since. Sampling has begun again but this site falls short of the 8 samples required to maintain classification. It is therefore now temporarily declassified with note 7. For reclassification at class C four samples (within class C limits) would be required.

Chichester Harbour – Dell Quay and Cobnor (*O. edulis*) B018J and B018K

The Local Authority advised that Cobnor (currently B-LT) and Dell Quay (currently B) have not been opened for harvesting by the IFCA for a number of seasons. They intend to sample on alternate months for the next 12 months (to allow flexibility for any missed samples) and will then review this situation. Therefore, these beds are being declassified note 2.

Seasonal Classification to be Updated

Taw/Torridge – Power Station (*Mytilus* spp.) B36AA

The class B season here finishes at the end of June so the classification list on the website will be amended to denote that it reverts to class C with effect from 1st July.

Explanatory Note 4 added to Marginal Beds

Portsmouth Harbour – Fareham Lake Middle (*O. edulis* and *C. gigas*) B020V

There have been three results over 4,600 (7,900 on 13/12/2017, 4,900 on 15/05/2018 and 4,900 on 13/06/2018) for this site so a possible downgrade has been issued (compliance since sampling started in November 2017 is now 80%). As this is a relatively new site with only 15 samples in total, there is not enough data to assess a seasonal classification. The Environment Agency (EA) have not reported any one-off pollution incidents or exceptional rainfall in relation to any of the high results. However, they have undertaken extra monitoring and recorded some elevated *E. coli* counts locally which they have been investigating. Southern Water also used dye tracing but previous blockages appear to be isolated incidents and instructions have been given on future prevention. Since this, the EA have recorded an improvement in sampling at the Fareham Town Quay outfall, although further monitoring is needed to confirm that the issues have been resolved. In consideration of allowing more time for the EA to assess the effect of water quality improvement work that has been undertaken, the marginal nature of the results and as the bed is not due to

open to harvesting until October, a note 4 is being added and this will be reviewed again in time for the annual review classification listing at the start of September.

Salcombe - Geese Quarries (*C.gigas*) B029D

Compliance at the following bed is now 72.7% over the past year and falls within the marginal buffer (84.5-89.5%) at 89.4% for 5 years, so it is being given an explanatory note 4 on the classification list. The classification status for this bed will be assessed in the 2018 annual review.

DESIGNATED BIVALVE MOLLUSC PRODUCTION AREAS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Upgrade

Production Area	Bed Name	Species	Class	Comment	Food Authority
West Mersea	Mersea Flats West	<i>C. gigas</i> & <i>O. edulis</i>	A		Colchester BC

Downgrade

Production Area	Bed Name	Species	Class	Comment	Food Authority
Thames	Southend Flats	<i>Mytilus spp.</i>	C		London PHA
Lune	Pilling Sands	<i>C. edule</i>	C		Wyre BC

Declassifications

Production Area	Bed Name	Species	Class	Comment	Food Authority
Chichester Harbour	Northney	<i>C. edule</i>	Declassified C	7	Havant BC
Chichester Harbour	Dell Quay	<i>O. edulis</i>	Declassified B	2	Chichester DC
Chichester Harbour	Cobnor	<i>O. edulis</i>	Declassified B-LT	2	Chichester DC

Seasonal Classification to be Updated

Production Area	Bed Name	Species	Class	Comment	Food Authority
Taw/Torridge	Power Station	<i>Mytilus spp.</i>	C	Transition period 1 st February to 31 st March Season 1 st April to 30 th June (reverting to class C at all other times)	North Devon DC

Note 4 added to marginal beds

Production Area	Bed Name	Species	Class	Comment	Food Authority
Portsmouth Harbour	Fareham Lake Middle	<i>O. edulis</i> & <i>C. gigas</i>	B	1 & 4	Portsmouth CC
Salcombe	Geese Quarries	<i>C. gigas</i>	B-LT	4	South Hams DC

These amendments have been made under Regulation (EC) 854/2004 and take immediate effect.

The classification list will be updated on the FSA website:
<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/shellfish-classification>

If you require further information or wish to discuss these amendments further please contact Catherine Miller or Emily Davis on the details below.

Yours sincerely

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