

23 January 2020

Reference: Update 6/ 19-20

To all interested parties:

Updated Classifications of the Bivalve Mollusc Production Areas in England & Wales for 2019-20

The Food Standards Agency wishes to notify you of the following update to the classifications of bivalve mollusc production areas. These amendments have been made under Regulation (EC) 2019/627 of 15 March 2019 and take immediate effect.

Downgrades

Southampton Water – Eling (*Tapes* spp.) B21AV

This site was classified at class C in September 2019, however, a result of 920,000 *E. coli* per 100g was recorded on 21 December 2019. No rainfall or pollution incidents were reported in the lead up to sampling (there was heavy rainfall, but this was not exceptional).

The data and statistics evidence very poor results. Eling is showing higher results on average and in terms of maximum than Hythe (which is already prohibited). The action state result was 20 times the upper class C limit and the first subsequent action state sample result was also double the upper limit. The Local Authority advises that there has been minimal commercial harvesting recently as the bed was heavily fished when first classified.

This site is **prohibited** for all species with effect from the date of this letter.

Thames Estuary – Maplin Sands East (*C. edule*) B16CN

An action state result was recorded at this class A site (represented by sampling at Crouch Approaches) on the 27 November 2019 (1,100 *E. coli*/100g). Local investigations did not reveal any evidence to waive the result. The Environment Agency advised that whilst there have not been any individual intensive rainfall events, autumn as a whole has been very wet. This may have resulted in polluted rainfall runoff from the saturated land.

As this result is above 700 *E. coli* per 100g and there are no grounds for it to be waived this site should be downgraded to class.

Current compliance figures with 230 *E. coli* per 100g are 80% (10 samples) over one-year (there was also a result of 330 *E. coli* per 100g on 21 February 2019) and 93.9% (33 samples) over three-years. This most recent result is the only result above 700 *E. coli* per 100g in the last three years. Current compliances with the class B threshold (4,600 *E. coli* per 100g) are 100% over the last year (10 samples), 100% over the last three years (33 samples) and 100% since sampling began in mid-2015 (51 samples).

The sampling data shows a seasonal trend. Results are 100% compliant with 230 *E. coli* per 100g during the proposed 'season' and buffer period since sampling began in mid-2015 (36 samples in total since sampling began). The Thames cockle beds in the regulated fishery are usually open between the months of June and October (depending upon results of IFCA stock surveys).

A seasonal classification is given from June to October, with a buffer period in May, in line with the permitted IFCA season. Extension of this season to align with IFCA revision of their Byelaw can be considered when necessary along with the dataset at that time.

Thames Estuary – Maplin Sands West (*C. edule*) B16CL

An action state result was recorded at this class A site (represented by sampling at East of Shoebury Buoy) on the 27 November 2019 (780 *E. coli*/100g). As above, local investigations did not reveal any evidence to waive the result. As this result is above 700 *E. coli* per 100g and there are no grounds for it to be waived this site should be downgraded.

Current compliance figures with 230 *E. coli* per 100g are 90% (10 samples) over one-year and 93.9% (33 samples) over three-years. This most recent result is the only result above 700 *E. coli* per 100g in the last three years. Current compliances with the class B threshold (4,600 *E. coli* per 100g) are 100% over the last year (10 samples), 100% over the last three years (33 samples) and 100% since sampling began in mid-2015 (51 samples).

The sampling data shows a similar seasonal trend to Maplin Sands East, however, there was a result of 780 *E. coli* per 100g recorded in August 2015 and 330 *E. coli* per 100g in March 2018. Results are 94.4% compliant with 230 *E. coli* per 100g during this 'season' and buffer period since sampling began in mid-2015 (36 samples). Whilst there was a result >700 (780 in August 2015), this falls outside the minimum 3-year dataset recommended for seasonal classification assessments.

A seasonal classification is given from June to October, with a buffer period in May, in line with the permitted IFCA season. Extension of this season to align with IFCA revision of their Byelaw can be considered when necessary along with the dataset at that time.

Seasonal classification updates

North Kent Coast – Hampton Pier (*C. gigas*, *O. edulis* and *Mytilus* spp.) B17CB

The class B season for this bed is due to end on 31st January so its classification status will need to be amended to class C on the classification list in time for February 1st.

Poole Harbour – Rockley (*C. edule*, *Mytilus* spp. and *Tapes* spp.) B54BR

The class B season for this bed is due to end on 31st January so its classification status will need to be amended to class C on the classification list in time for February 1st.

Poole Harbour – Wareham Channel (*C. edule*, *Mytilus* spp. and *Tapes* spp.) B54BS

The class B season for this bed is due to end on 31st January so its classification status will need to be amended to class C on the classification list in time for February 1st.

DESIGNATED BIVALVE MOLLUSC PRODUCTION AREAS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Downgrades

Production Area	Bed Name	Species	Class	Comment	Food Authority
Southampton Water	Eling	All spp.	Prohibited		Southampton PHA
Thames Estuary	Maplin East	<i>C. edule</i>	seasonal A	Buffer Period 1st May - 31st May Class A season 1st June – 31st October (reverting to class B at all other times)	London PHA
Thames Estuary	Maplin West	<i>C. edule</i>	seasonal A	Buffer Period 1st May - 31st May Class A season	London PHA

1st June – 31st October
(reverting to class B at
all other times)

Seasonal classifications updates

Production Area	Bed Name	Species	Class	Comment	Food Authority
North Kent Coast	Hampton Pier	<i>C. gigas</i> and <i>O. edulis</i>	Seasonal C	Buffer Period 1st August - 31st August Class B season 1st September – 31st January (reverting to class C at all other times)	Canterbury CC
Poole Harbour	Rockley	<i>C. edule</i> , <i>Tapes</i> spp. and <i>Mytilus</i> spp.	Seasonal C	Buffer period 1st April – 30 th April Class B season 1st May - 31 st January (reverting to class C at all other times)	Poole BC
Poole Harbour	Wareham Channel	<i>C. edule</i> , <i>Tapes</i> spp. and <i>Mytilus</i> spp.	Seasonal C	Buffer period 1 st April – 30 th April Class B season 1 st May - 31 st January (reverting to class C at all other times)	Poole BC

The classification list will be updated on the FSA website in due course:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/shellfish-classification>

If you require further information or wish to discuss these amendments further, please contact the Shellfish Delivery team on the details below.

Yours sincerely

C S Miller

Catherine Miller
Shellfish Hygiene Delivery
Food Standards Agency

Email: shellfish@food.gov.uk