

Shellfish - Guidelines for Customers

- The Laboratory need to know in advance when samples will be arriving in order to ensure adequate resources are available.
- Samples must be submitted to the Laboratory on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday between 08:30 and 13:00, unless prior arrangements have been made for later submission.
- The maximum storage/stability time from sampling to analysis is 24 hours. The lab is open from 08:30 to 17:00, so to ensure that there is sufficient time to perform the analysis, careful consideration on what time the samples are taken will be critical. E.g. samples taken at 08:00 and delivered at 17:00 would be out of time by 08:30 when the Laboratory is next open. Samples taken at 16:00, stored overnight in a cool box to maintain a temperature between 1°C and 10°C and delivered to the lab following morning would be satisfactory, as the Laboratory would have until 16:00 to analyse the samples.
- The minimum number of shellfish required for analysis is stated in table 1 at the end of this document. It is recommended that a few extra are collected in case any are dead, empty or too small. In general the more shellfish that are included in the test, the less the final result will be influenced by the inherent animal-to-animal variation in E. coli concentration.
- Wherever possible, shellfish should be sampled by the method normally used for commercial harvesting as this can influence the degree of microbial contamination.
- Samples must be received in an intact food grade plastic bag (preferably double bagged) and properly packed in a cool box with ice packs. Samples must not be frozen or become partially frozen by direct contact with the ice packs (this can be avoided by separating the sample from the ice pack with a piece of polystyrene). The food grade bag is used to minimise cross contamination from other samples, if more than one location is being sampled, and from the cool box or ice packs.
- The temperature of the surrounding seawater at the time of sampling must be recorded. Where intertidal shellfish are sampled dry, the temperature of the shellfish sample should be recorded immediately after collection. To do this, the temperature probe should be placed in the centre of the bagged shellfish sample. This should be recorded on the sample submission form.

- For samples where less than four hours have elapsed between collection and receipt at the laboratory, the between shellfish sample temperature should be less than the temperature recorded at the time of sampling. If samples arrive at the laboratory any more than four hours after collection, the temperature of the sample must be between 1°C and 10°C.
- Any samples arriving at the laboratory without a fully completed sample submission form cannot be tested. Submission forms are available on the Laboratory’s web page (<https://www.gov.gg/StatesAnalyticalLaboratory>).
- Any samples received in the laboratory with the bag leaking, the shellfish covered in mud, immersed in water, mud or sand, or deviating from the above temperature requirements will, if accepted, be reported unaccredited.

Table 1 - Recommended number of shellfish required for analysis

Shellfish Type	Recommended Number Required *
King Scallops	10-12
Razor Clams	10-12
Oysters	10-18
Hard Clams	12-18
Queen Scallops	15-30
Mussels	15-30
Manila Clams	18-35
Cockles	30-50

*These are recommended numbers in order to achieve at least 50g of shellfish flesh and liquor. Sufficient shellfish must be opened in order to achieve this minimum weight which may be more or could be less than the minimum stated above. However, in all cases a minimum of ten shellfish must be used.