DUNGENESS CRAB: GUIDANCE FOR REQUIRED PRE-HARVEST SAMPLING FOR WHOLE COOKED PRODUCT

Dungeness crab can sometimes contain paralytic shellfish toxin (PST) and domoic acid (DA), naturally occurring marine toxins which can pose a danger to people if consumed. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) has developed the Crab Biotoxin Sampling Plan to protect consumers from these hazards, which must be observed by harvesters and processors creating whole cooked crab.

Species other than Dungeness, Dungeness that will be eviscerated, and live crab are not subject to these requirements at this time.

PERMITTING:

A seafood processor who wishes to process whole, cooked crab or sectioned crab, must first obtain a seafood processing permit from ADEC Food, Safety, and Sanitation (ADEC FSS). Permit requirements include:

- *a written hazard analysis (HA),*
- *a hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP) plan, and*
- *a written recall plan.*

A seafood processing permit from ADEC FSS is not required for live crab of any species.

TIMING

Harvest may occur for no more than ten (10) days from the sample collection date. Afterwards, a new sampling event must occur to return the status of a statistical area to unrestricted.

In the event of unacceptable sample results of either PSP or DA toxins, the statistical area will be considered restricted for harvest. The area may return to unrestricted after acceptable levels of both toxins for two consecutive sampling events collected at least 7 days apart between each.

LIMITS

Paralytic Shellfish Toxin (PST):	<80 µg/100 g
Domoic Acid (DA):	<30 ppm

If pre-harvest samples meet or exceed these upper limits, the area the lot the samples originate from may not be processed as whole cooked crab.

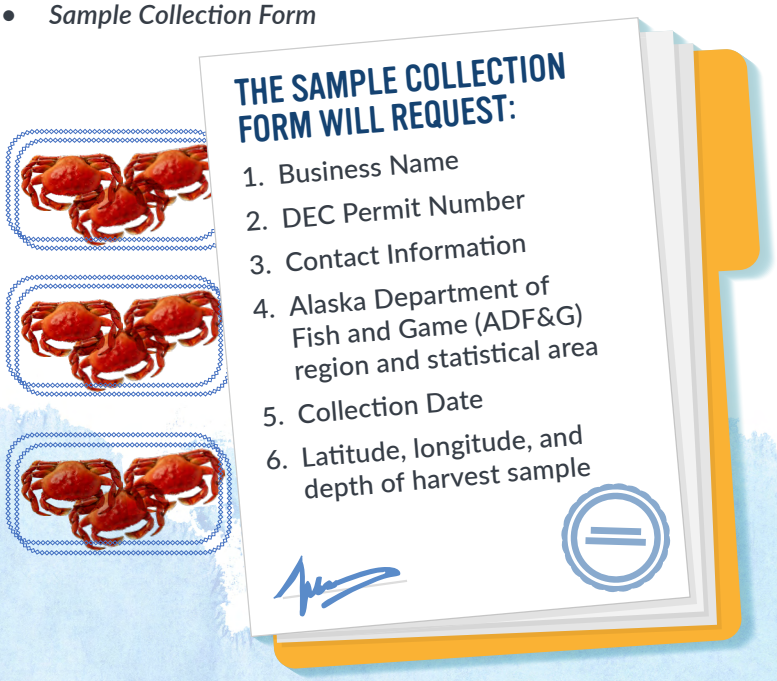
PRE-HARVEST SAMPLE

Harvesters/Processors must submit samples prior to harvest of Dungeness crab for creation of whole, cooked product unless they are harvesting from an area that has a recent analysis (i.e., in last 10 days).

Open and restricted areas are available on the ADEC FSS Crab Biotoxin Plan webpage.

Samples must comprise of:

- *9 individual Dungeness crab from a single statistical area. These 9 will be used as 3 composite samples, each comprised of 3 crab*
- *Sample Collection Form*



LABORATORY ANALYSIS

Samples may be sent to the ADEC Environmental Health Lab (EHL) for analysis. If preferring an alternative facility, prior approval must first be obtained by the sampling entity. Preliminary results will be made available by the EHL to facilitate more rapid decisions regarding area openings/ closures. Samples must be collected according to EHL sampling instructions.

THE EHL LAB WILL CHARGE A FEE	
$125	PST per sample
$100	DA per sample

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

- *Keep the crab clean and away from any potential contaminants, such as fuel, at the collection site. Treat it as if you were going to eat it.*
- *Send crab whole*
- *Wear clean nitrile (rinse gloves between each crab) to minimize cross contamination*
- *Place the crab in labeled food-grade zip-lock bag with an ID tag*
- *Freeze as soon as possible*
- *Fill out the Sample Collection Form*
- *Place the Fish Sampling Form in a zip-lock bag with the fish samples to keep it dry. Bag all of the samples together (in their individual bags), freeze, and place in the wet-lock box. Depending on location, ship FedEx, Penn Air, or Alaska Airlines Goldsteak to:*

Environmental Health Laboratory (EHL)
5251 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99507
Shipping & Receiving: 907-375-8231
DEC.EH-Lab-ShippingReceiving@alaska.gov

REPORTING

Analysis reports of the pre-harvest sample must be submitted to ADEC FSS before harvesting. FSS will use the sample results to update the ADEC FSS Crab Biotoxin page to indicate that the sampled statistical area is unrestricted for harvest.

If the sample results indicate acceptable action levels for PST and DA, then ADEC FSS will indicate on the Crab Biotoxin page the harvest duration based on the sampling date.

If sample results exceed acceptable action levels for either PST and DA, ADEC FSS will indicate that the Dungeness crab harvested from the statistical area is restricted and may not be processed as a whole, cooked product but that the Dungeness crab can be sold live or as a sectioned product.

SAMPLERS MUST NOTIFY THE EHL'S SHIPPING & RECEIVING SECTION BEFORE COLLECTING AND SENDING SAMPLES TO COORDINATE THE SUBMISSION AND DETERMINE COSTS.