

Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment



Matthew Rodriguez
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Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Governor

MEMORANDUM

TO: Charlton H. Bonham, Director
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
1416 Ninth Street, 12th Floor
Sacramento, California 95814

FROM: Lauren Zeise, Ph.D. *acted for*
Acting Director

DATE: November 23, 2016

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION ON OPENING OF COMMERCIAL DUNGENESS
CRAB FISHERY FROM 40° 46.15' N LATITUDE NORTH TO THE
CALIFORNIA/OREGON BORDER

The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHA) has determined, in consultation with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), that consumption of Dungeness Crab taken from state waters from 40° 46.15' N Latitude (the north jetty at the Humboldt Bay entrance, including all ocean waters of Humboldt Bay) north to the California/Oregon border does not pose a public health threat for domoic acid exposure. This determination is based on data from repeated sampling of Dungeness Crab in these areas and analysis of these samples by CDPH laboratories for domoic acid. Thus, OEHA, in consultation with CDPH, recommends that the commercial Dungeness Crab fishery in this area be opened on December 1, 2016, in a manner consistent with the emergency regulations adopted by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) on November 15, 2016.

The areas south of this line to Point Reyes, Marin County (38° 00' N Latitude) should remain closed or have the opening delayed.

Domoic acid poisoning in humans may occur within minutes to hours after consumption of affected seafood and can result in signs and symptoms ranging from vomiting and diarrhea to permanent loss of short-term memory (Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning), coma, or death.

The current federal action levels for domoic acid are 20 parts per million (ppm) for all fish, with the exception of 30 ppm in the viscera of Dungeness crabs. State and federal

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laws prohibit the commercial distribution of seafood products that contain domoic acid levels above the action level. Levels of domoic acid in recent viscera samples of Dungeness Crab caught from state waters in areas from 40° 46.15' N Latitude north to the California/Oregon border did not test above the action level of 30 ppm. However, domoic acid in Dungeness Crab caught from state waters in areas from Point Reyes to areas south of 40° 46.15' N Latitude show that domoic acid levels in viscera of some samples remain elevated. The sampling results for Dungeness Crab caught in state waters from Point Reyes to the Oregon border are provided in the table on pages 3 and 4.

CDFW, CDPH, and OEHHA are continuing to monitor and analyze Dungeness Crab to determine when the crab fisheries in these areas can safely be opened.

If you have questions, please contact OEHHA Chief Deputy Director Allan Hirsch at Allan.Hirsch@oehha.ca.gov or (916) 322-6325.

Dungeness Crab Sampling Results

PORT	AREA	SAMPLE COLLECTION DATE	NUMBER OF SAMPLES	VISCERA SAMPLE RESULTS: RANGE	AVERAGE LEVEL IN VISCERA	SAMPLES EXCEEDING ACTION LEVEL (30 ppm in viscera)
Crescent City	North	9/14/16	6	6.7-53 ppm	19 ppm	17%
	South	11/1/16	6	<2.5-8.8 ppm	5 ppm	0%
	North	11/1/16	6	<2.5-14 ppm	7 ppm	0%
Trinidad	South	9/16/16	6	5.9-33 ppm	17 ppm	17%
	South	11/2/16	6	<2.5-7.6 ppm	4 ppm	0%
	North	11/1/16	6	<2.5-25 ppm	9 ppm	0%
Eureka	Samoa	9/16/16	6	8.2-20 ppm	14 ppm	0%
	Eel River	9/15/16	6	<2.5-29 ppm	14 ppm	0%
Fort Bragg	Usal	9/16/16	6	<2.5-64 ppm	17 ppm	17%
	Usal	10/11/16	6	7.3-74 ppm	33 ppm	33%
	Usal	11/12/16	6	3.8-50 ppm	27 ppm	50%
	Pt. Arena	11/12/16	6	8-47 ppm	26 ppm	33%
Bodega Bay	Point Reyes	9/9/16	6	<2.5-16 ppm	6 ppm	0%
	Russian River	9/10/16	6	4-60 ppm	21 ppm	17%
	Russian River	9/26/16	6	8-29 ppm	19 ppm	0%
	Russian River	10/12/16	6	<2.5-71 ppm	17 ppm	17%
	Bodega Head	10/12/16	6	<2.5-40 ppm	15 ppm	33%
	Bodega Head	10/27/16	6	<2.5-51 ppm	18 ppm	17%
	Russian River	10/27/16	6	5.4-51 ppm	18 ppm	17%

PORT	AREA	SAMPLE COLLECTION DATE	NUMBER OF SAMPLES	VISCERA SAMPLE RESULTS: RANGE	AVERAGE LEVEL IN VISCERA	SAMPLES EXCEEDING ACTION LEVEL (30 ppm in viscera)
Bodega Bay	Bodega Head	11/3/16	6	<2.5-65 ppm	13	17%
	Russian River	11/3/16	6	Non-detectable	Non-detectable	0%
	Bodega Head	11/10/16	6	5.5-14 ppm	9	0%
	Russian River	11/10/16	6	3.2-11	8	0%