

Recent developments in depuration (England and Wales)

Thick trough shell (*Spisula solida*)

Change to Conditions of Approval stipulations: minimum salinity increased to 30‰; minimum temperature stipulation under review (currently at 12°C).

Cockles (*Cerastoderma edule*)

Change to Conditions of Approval stipulations: Cockle stipulation now 12 hours maximum time elapsed allowed between harvesting and commencement of depuration.

Sand gaper (*Mya arenaria*)

Depuration of the sand gaper (*Mya arenaria*) has been approved for the first time in England and Wales. Cefas has drawn on the extensive experience of colleagues in the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, USA in order to set appropriate operational limits on the Conditions of Approval.

A minimum depuration period of 72 hours (rather than the usual 42) has been stipulated so far on the basis of the only successful challenge testing evidence available. In addition, indications so far are that the extended period may be necessary in certain circumstances to sufficiently cleanse these shellfish of sand/grit. However, the usual 42 hour minimum period would be considered with satisfactory microbiological challenge testing.

The current clam capacity has been set at a level equivalent to a shellfish to water ratio of approximately 1:14 based on that for which we have specific UK evidence so far.

Minimum temperature: 10°C
Minimum salinity: 25‰

In the absence of any further evidence seawater may not be re-used for *Mya arenaria*.

Further details on approval of bivalve purification systems depuration may be found on the Cefas website at:

<http://www.cefas.defra.gov.uk/our-science/animal-health-and-food-safety/food-safety/purification-plants.aspx>

On a more general note, any bivalves intended for depuration must come from areas officially designated as class B (or A) – see FSA classification listing for details at:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/monitoring/shellfish/shellharvestareas/>