

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

Chefs and food handlers PLEASE READ

Things are heating up in parts of our distribution areas. By following these instructions, you can prevent mortality of your shellfish products.

- Keep mussels buried in ice AND refrigerated at all times in false bottom boxes or drip pans.
- **If you notice the shell is gaping open slightly, try running cold water over the mussel.** If it is still alive you will see the mussel close within about sixty seconds. If it remains wide open, the mussel has died or is dying and should not be consumed.
- Temperature is always an important factor; however, it is even more critical during this time. When mussels are ready to reproduce, increases in temperature or rough handling will cause them to release spawn. Spawn typically has a strong aroma.
- If you do find that the mussels have spawned, take the bags out of the boxes and immediately rinse them off with FRESH COLD WATER. Rinse and drain the bottom of the boxes before returning the mussels to the box. Ice the mussels and keep them as close to 34°F degrees as possible.
- **Critical control points are:**
 - **Loading docks.** Move product directly into coolers,
 - **Kitchens.** Keep mussels iced and in the cooler until the time of preparation.
- Please take the time to pass this information and handling instruction on to any of your staff handling mussels. We will be happy to answer any further questions they may have or to provide you with additional copies of this notice for you to distribute.

**DO NOT LET SHELLFISH SIT OUT ON THE LOADING DOCK OR IN THE KITCHEN
EVEN FOR SHORT PERIODS OF TIME**

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