China Ban on West Coast Shellfish

Last updated 12/19/2013

On December 5 our agency was notified that China was banning all imports of molluscan shellfish from North America area #67, which includes all harvest areas in Alaska, Canada, Washington, Oregon, and northern California. China reported a shipment of geoducks tested high in paralytic shellfish poison (PSP) and arsenic.

Since then we have been working closely with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and our state partners gathering facts, tracing the geoducks to the original harvest area, and closely reviewing our PSP test data.

Our role in public health is to ensure commercially harvested shellfish in Washington are safe to eat. We take this role very seriously. When shellfish of any type exceed safe testing levels, we close growing areas until tests show the shellfish are again safe to eat.

It’s our goal to resolve this issue quickly. We know this ban creates a hardship on Washington's shellfish industry and we continue to update them on the situation.

For more detailed information, see our document China Bans Bivalve Shellfish from U.S. West Coast (PDF). This document will be updated as new information becomes available.