



Oyster Seed Importation Rules

for Florida, Alabama, Mississippi,
and Louisiana

May 2021

Photo credit: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Florida: Seed Importation Rules

- Agency: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Aquaculture
- Contact: [Aquaculture WEB@FDACS.gov](mailto:Aquaculture_WEB@FDACS.gov)
- Documentation Required:
 - Diagnostics results from an accredited laboratory that identify test results and dates of testing
 - Official Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (OCVI) made on official form from seed's state of origin, issued and signed by licensed veterinarian in state of origin
 - Diagnostics results and OCVI must show no evidence of following pathogens in oysters:
 - *Haplosporidium nelsoni* (MSX), *Perkinsus marinus* (Dermo), *Bonamia exitiosa*
 - OCVI is valid for 30 days following issuance
 - Documentation of broodstock origin
 - Ploidy verification for triploid oyster seed including methods used to create triploids and verify ploidy, and ploidy results from seed sample



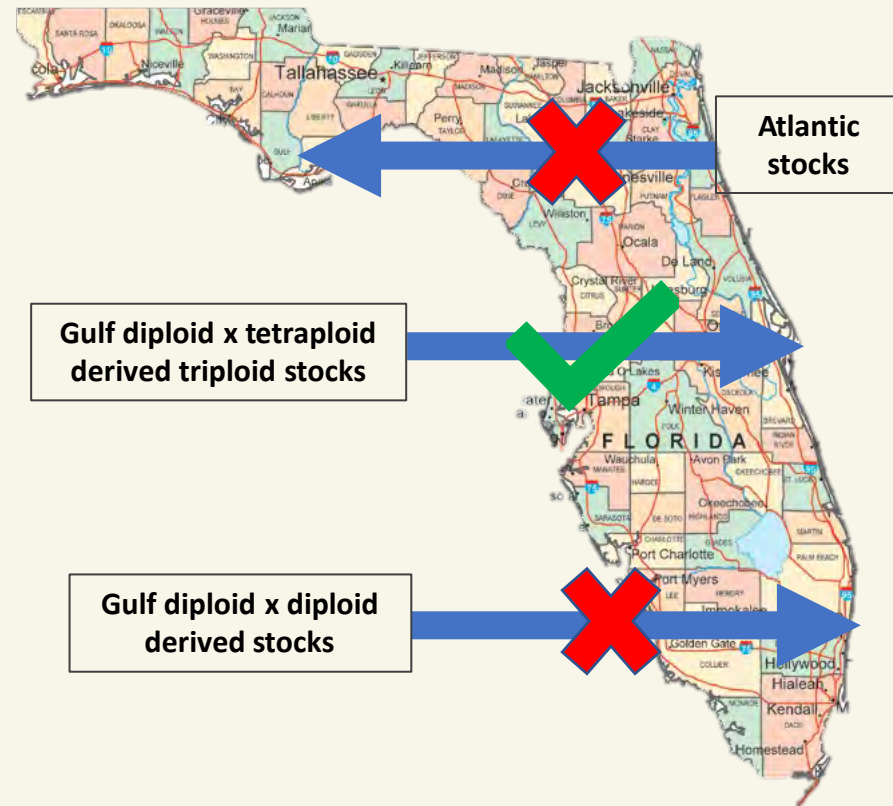
Florida: Seed Importation Rules

- Agency: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), Division of Aquaculture
- Contact: [Aquaculture WEB@FDACS.gov](mailto:Aquaculture_WEB@FDACS.gov)
- When purchasing seed from out-of-state hatchery:
 - Request diagnostics results and OCVI on oyster seed you wish to import into Florida
 - Must be provided to the Division before shipment of seed for approval via email (address above)
 - After receiving written/email approval seed may be imported into Florida
 - At time of delivery, request an invoice and copies of documentation from seller with the following information:
 - Date of entry/receipt and date of shipment
 - Names and addresses of seller and buyer
 - Buyer's AQ certificate number
 - Total number and average size of oysters
 - Copies of diagnostic test results, OCVI, and ploidy results (if applicable)
 - Broodstock origin documentation
 - After receiving order, maintain all health records and receipts for minimum of two years and make available to Division staff upon request.



Florida: Seed Importation Rules

- Agency: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Aquaculture
- Contact: [Aquaculture WEB@FDACS.gov](mailto:Aquaculture_WEB@FDACS.gov)
- Oyster Seed Movement Rules:
 - Atlantic-derived seed are prohibited for growout in Gulf coast waters due to differences in genetics and presence of MSX in the Atlantic Ocean
 - Seed, with exception of tetraploid-derived stocks, produced from oysters in Florida Gulf coast waters can only be grown in Gulf coast waters
 - For triploid seed produced from a tetraploid and diploid cross, broodstock must come from Gulf waters and seed may be grown in any state waters



Alabama: Seed Importation Rules

- Agency: Alabama Department of Public Health
- Contact: Byron Webb
Email: byron.webb@adph.state.al.us
Phone: 251-331-3447

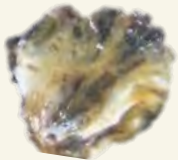


- Currently, only restrictions are that oyster seed can not come from a hatchery either located on the Atlantic or Pacific coasts.
- Seed are allowed from hatcheries located on Gulf coast of Florida and Louisiana.

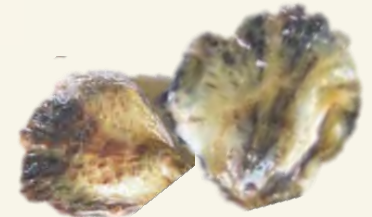


Mississippi: Seed Importation Rules

- Agency: Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
- Contact: Erik Broussard, Marine Administrator
erik.broussard@dmr.ms.gov
Jason Rider, Biological Program Coordinator
jason.rider@dmr.ms.gov



- Molluscan shellfish aquaculture operations must only culture species native to the Gulf of Mexico.
- Polyploid native species are permitted.
- Imported shellfish seed stock to be used for growout in Mississippi waters must be first generation descendants of broodstock who originated in the Gulf of Mexico.
- The hatchery where the shellfish seed stock was produced must provide documentation of broodstock origin.
- All on-shore facilities must certify that all stock cultures and originating sources outside of Mississippi are free of any disease or parasites harmful to marine organisms, excluding Dermo (*Perkinsus marinus*). Certification must be submitted to MDMR.
- Title 22 Regulations regarding oysters can be found in Parts 1, 13, and 17:
<https://dmr.ms.gov/regulations/>



Louisiana: Seed Importation Rules

- Agency: Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
- Contact: Carolina Bourque, LDWF oyster program manager
Email: cbourque@wlf.la.gov



- No statutory limitations and each importation event is handled on a case-by-case basis. Only seed requests from within the Gulf region are considered.
- Requires disease certification (Dermo, MSX, and *Bonamia*).
- Oyster seed from Florida or Texas are also required to undergo a quarantine and depuration treatment. It is not clear if, after this treatment, seed will be allowed into state waters. It has been a hatchery-broodstock issue.
- The permit application can be found at this website and in the resource materials:
https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/assets/Fishing/Commercial_Fishing/Files/Commercial-Oyster/oyster_importation_application_2019.pdf

