

Bivalve molluscs: minimum measures for the control of diseases

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OBJECTIVE: to define the minimum Community measures needed to control diseases affecting bivalve molluscs (oysters and mussels) in order prevent the spread of these diseases which are a source of substantial losses to the industry. **COMMUNITY MEASURE:** Council Directive 95/70/EC.

SUBSTANCE: - the Member States shall ensure that all establishments which breed bivalve molluscs are registered by the official body and that they keep a register showing: the numbers of living molluscs which are introduced into the farm, the numbers of molluscs which leave the farm and are returned to the water and the abnormal mortality rate which is recorded. This register may be examined by the official body at any time, at the latter's request, and must be regularly updated and kept for a period of four years; - the abnormal mortality among molluscs should be seen as a sudden process which affects approximately 15% of the stocks and which occurs over a short period of time between two inspections (about 15 days); - a monitoring and sampling programme should be set up at mollusc farms, in areas where molluscs are farmed and also in those areas where they grow naturally; - the official body shall be notified as soon as possible of any abnormal mortality levels recorded among bivalve molluscs. In this case, samples shall be taken for examination in an approved laboratory. If diseases are found to be present, the official body shall carry out a thorough epidemiological investigation in order to establish the source of the disease and to prevent its spread; - the diagnosis of the diseases shall be carried out by national reference laboratories which are to be appointed in each Member State and coordinated by a Community reference laboratory for bivalve mollusc diseases; - on-the-spot checks may be carried out by experts from the Commission;

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