

Food Safety Information Notice 02-2026

Registration of Shellfish Harvesters as Food Business Operators



AN t-ÚDARÁS UM
CHOSAINT
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SEA-FISHERIES
PROTECTION
AUTHORITY

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority has issued a Food Safety Information Notice (FSIN) entitled:
Registration of Shellfish Harvesters as Food Business Operators

Legislative Basis:

- [Regulation \(EC\) No 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs \(as amended\)](#)
- [Regulation \(EC\) No 853/2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin \(as amended\)](#)
- [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1374](#)

APPLIES TO All shellfish harvesters placing live bivalve molluscs on the market in Ireland

WHO IS A SHELLFISH HARVESTER?

Under EU food hygiene legislation, a shellfish harvester is defined as a “gatherer” — any natural or legal person who collects live bivalve molluscs by any means from a harvesting area for the purpose of handling and placing on the market.

Regulation (EC) No 853/2004, Annex I, Section II — definition of “gatherer”

For the purposes of this Information Notice this includes harvesters of: Oysters, Mussels, Clams, Cockles, Scallops. Other Live Bivalve Molluscs, as well as other Shellfish Species including Live Echinoderms, Live Tunicates and Live Marine Gastropods.

LEGAL REQUIREMENT

All food business operators including shellfish harvesters are required to **register their food business** with the SFPA as the competent authority.

Registration is a **legal obligation**. It is the responsibility of each operator to ensure they are registered.

Article 6(2), Regulation (EC) No 852/2004

WHEN TO REGISTER

New operators: Register **before** commencing operations.

Existing operators: If not yet registered, do so **as soon as possible**.

Changes: Notify the SFPA of any significant change in activities or any closure.

If you complete a Shellfish Registration Document — you must be registered

Any person completing a **Shellfish Registration Document (SRD)** to accompany a batch of live bivalve molluscs or other shellfish species is a gatherer within the meaning of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004, Annex III, Section VII, Chapter I, point 3. You are therefore a food business operator and are **legally required to be registered with the SFPA**.

“The purpose of this document is to provide Guidance on the Registration of Shellfish Harvesters as Food Business Operators. For the avoidance of doubt, this information does not constitute legal advice or analysis and should not be relied upon as such. Whilst every effort is made to ensure accurate and relevant material is published, no responsibility is accepted by, or on behalf of the SFPA, for any errors, omissions or misleading statements on these pages.”

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HOW TO REGISTER SIMPLE PROCESS

- 1 Download the form**
Complete the **Registered Food Business Operator Application Form**, available at: [sfpa.ie — Registration & Approval Application Forms](https://sfpa.ie/Registration%20&%20Approval%20Application%20Forms)
- 2 Submit by email**
Return the completed form to: Applications@sfpa.ie
- 3 Or submit by post**
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, Block B, Clogheen, Clonakilty, Co. Cork, P85 TX47
- 4 Queries**
Contact: SFPAFood&fisheriessupport@sfpa.ie

✓ **There is no charge for registration.**

ACTION REQUIRED

If you have not yet registered as a food business operator with the SFPA, you are required to do so as soon as possible. Registration is a legal obligation and the SFPA will be contacting operators to confirm registration is in place.

Following submission of your application, the SFPA will assess it and contact you with the outcome. Please note that registration is not automatic and will only be confirmed by letter once the SFPA is satisfied it is the appropriate outcome for your business.

Contact Details: sfpafood&fisheriessupport@sfpa.ie

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