

# clearwater food safety fact sheet

## FOOD-BORNE ILLNESSES

*Everyone at Clearwater understands that the seafood we handle will become the centrepiece of our customers' next meal. Our commitment to the best food safety practices and our passion for continuous improvement help ensure our seafood is always a safe and healthy choice.*

*Food Safety Vision Statement, Clearwater Seafoods Limited Partnership*

Seafood is a great source of protein, low in fat, and a healthy choice for a well balanced diet. Clearwater is a leader in providing the highest quality seafood eating experience and customer care is a key pillar in our success. We feel that it is important to keep you informed about food safety and have developed a series of fact sheets for your interest. Please see our Food Safety Overview to learn more about Clearwater's commitment and best practices regarding food safety.

### **This Fact Sheet Includes information on:**

- The common causes of food-borne illnesses (E Coli, Listeria monocytogenes, Salmonella, Vibrio)
- The measures that Clearwater is taking with respect to environmental swabs, hygiene and sanitation to protect our customers against food-borne illnesses in all our seafood products

### **Common Causes of Food-borne Illnesses**

Food and beverages can become contaminated by a variety of pathogens, which include different types of bacteria, parasites and viruses. The most common consequence of consuming contaminated food is food-borne illnesses or 'food poisoning,' resulting in symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, and diarrhea. In more severe cases or when affecting sensitive populations, food-borne illnesses can have more serious repercussions. The food-borne illnesses associated with pathogens such as Escherichia coli (or E. Coli), Listeria monocytogenes, Salmonella, or Vibrio can be contracted when

food is improperly handled, processed or prepared. Proper sanitation, hygiene, food storage and food preparation practices can greatly reduce the risk of food-borne illnesses from these pathogens.

Due to the serious nature of food-borne illnesses, Health Canada through the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has established rigorous protocols to monitor and test food processing and handling facilities. Clearwater also takes additional measures to protect our customers through best practices in production, sanitation, testing and food safety audits.

### **Clearwater Best Practices for Prevention**

Our state-of-the-art factory vessels and land-based production plants are equipped with modern food production equipment. Appropriate temperature settings for cooking equipment and freezers maintain food quality. Our land-based facilities maintain consistent air quality and temperature in production areas during processing.

At the end of each production cycle all equipment is shut down for thorough sanitizing with water, detergents and disinfectants. Prior to the commencement of the next production cycle all equipment is inspected and problem areas are addressed. Water used for cleaning is tested for safe chlorine levels and checked again at least once during production.

Employees must follow strict hygiene protocols including the use of foot and hand dip stations that are regularly refreshed. Appropriate footwear, clothing, hair protection, and smocks are required for all employees and any visitors. Pre-entry points control access to production areas and act as storage areas for any clothing (smocks, gloves, aprons etc) used in the production areas. Uniforms are laundered regularly and not permitted to

leave the premises at any time. If an employee's health is compromised either by an injury or illness such that there is a risk to food safety, he or she is given a leave of absence until adequately recovered. All employees are trained to monitor and report any activity that may compromise the safety of Clearwater's seafood products and an open communication policy between production workers and managers is in effect.

To ensure that our sanitation and hygiene practices are having the desired effect, Food Safety staff take environmental swabs of product and non-product contact surfaces on a regular basis at our facilities and at the end of the fishing trip for our vessels. These samples are tested either at our company labs or sent externally to third party laboratories. A robust environmental swabbing program allows us to monitor risk areas and take

corrective measures should the need arise. In addition to testing production areas, samples of final product are sent to third party laboratories for additional analysis.

We take great pride in our food safety practices and welcome regular audits from CFIA officials. In addition, we have opened our plants to customer audits as well as have a company program of self-auditing to ensure that every effort is taken across the company to provide safe seafood to our customers.

Clearwater's food safety program is unmatched in the industry, and you can be assured that our seafood offerings continue to be safe and of the highest and most consistent quality in the world.

*Clearwater is recognized for consistently exceptional seafood. We take pride in our scallop, lobster, shrimp, clam, crab, masago and groundfish products because we know they comprise wholesome and nutritious food choices for our customers and their families.*

For additional information contact [foodsafety@clearwater.ca](mailto:foodsafety@clearwater.ca)



*Dedicated to Sustainable Seafood Excellence*



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