



Tomás J. Aragón, MD, DrPH
Director and State Public Health Officer

Gavin Newsom
Governor

January 9, 2025

Re: Crab Evisceration Program

Dear Stakeholders,

We are writing to inform you about the implementation of the new Eviscerated Crab regulations as mandated by [Senate Bill 80 \(SB 80\)](#) which was approved by the Governor on October 09, 2021. This law was designed to allow some level of continued crab fishing during domoic acid events with the implementation of controls that would minimize health hazards to protect consumers. Removing the internal organs (viscera) that contain high levels of domoic acid will allow for the consumption of unaffected crab meat. The new regulations will be effective January 11, 2025, and apply to various participants in the commercial crab industry that intend to receive, hold, or eviscerate Dungeness crab or rock crab caught in areas subject to a California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Evisceration Order. These new regulations include but are not limited to the following provisions:

- **Applicability:** The crab evisceration program regulations apply to processors who receive, hold, or eviscerate Dungeness crab or rock crab caught in areas subject to a department Evisceration Order for commercial purposes in California.
- **Registration Requirements:** Processors must have a valid [processed food registration](#) and a separate crab evisceration registration, both renewed annually, and pay applicable fees.
- **Application Process:** A separate registration is required for each evisceration location. Applications must include detailed information and supporting documents, including but not limited to:
 - HACCP plans that adequately control health hazards
 - Recall procedures to trace and remove affected products from the supply chain.
 - Lot coding systems to identify specific affected products that allow prompt recalls and mitigate risks to the public.
- **Validity and Renewal:** Evisceration registrations are valid for one year, renewable annually. Noncompliance can lead to revocation or suspension of registration.



- **Crab Testing:** Crab sample sets consist of six crab each. Testing for domoic acid must be conducted by laboratories certified for Domoic Acid testing that is approved by the Department, with specific action levels for viscera and meat.
- **Handling and Evisceration:** Crab harvested from biotoxin management areas under a CDPH Evisceration Order must be eviscerated from 12:01 a.m. on the harvest date of the affected sample set. Evisceration Orders are rescinded after two consecutive passing tests conducted at least seven days apart.
- **Authorization of Evisceration:** All crab harvested from an area under a CDPH Evisceration Order must be processed by processors approved by CDPH, and landing receipts must indicate crab came from evisceration-authorized areas.
- **Recordkeeping and Prohibitions:** Firms must maintain detailed records and adhere to strict prohibitions against falsifying records, selling uneviscerated crab from affected areas, and other violations, subject to enforcement actions.

Who Will Be Affected:

- Commercial crab fishing license holders.
- Processors and distributors of crab products.
- Consumers who rely on safe and sustainable crab products.

If you have questions about this letter, please visit our [Domoic acid webpage](#) or contact the Food & Drug Branch at (916) 650-6500 or SeafoodReporting@cdph.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Ali Hossain
Domoic Acid Control Specialist
California Department of Public Health