MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES
VETERINARY SERVICES DIVISION
HOPE GARDENS, KINGSTON 6
JAMAICA
Telephone: 876-977-2489/2492
Fax: 876-977-0885
Email: vsd@moa.gov.jm

4 December, 2013

MONITORING OF THE PRODUCTION AREAS (PEDRO BANKS) TO FACILITATE INTERNATIONAL COMPLIANCE FOR EXPORT OF FISHERY PRODUCTS (*Strombus gigas)*

The Veterinary Services Division (VSD) also known as the Competent Authority is ultimately responsible for all aspects of the health control of aquaculture and marine products for export including the Queen Conch (*Strombus gigas*) from Jamaica. The Veterinary Officer of the VSD therefore inspects and monitor all production areas, harveting vessels, processing facilities and collect samples for testing at the VSD laboratory.

The Veterinary Committee, under the Aquaculture Act, Section 7 evaluates the process for the Licensing and Registration of processing facilities and harvesting vessels annually. This committee also meets on a monthly basis or when necessary to discuss any related matters

The Competent Authority (CA) makes every effort to improve the current inspection and monitoring checks at the various levels of harvesting/production, transportation and processing, aimed at securing greater product safety. This is accomplished via improved routine water and product sampling at the production site as it relates to marine gastropods. Sampling is based on approved fishery grids/ zones put in place based on the concluded population study / abundance surveys and geographical location of marine gastropods in the Jamaican waters to meet the upcoming harvesting session.

The harvesting/production, processing and export of all fishery products from Jamaica are governed by the Aquaculture, Inland and Marine Products and By-Products Act (1999) and companion Regulations (2000).

In addition, the current regulations has been amended to reflect greater clarity and detailing of steps and corrective measures to be taken both at the production and processing levels based on regulatory monitoring of critical production/processing sites when breaches have occurred or where laboratory results point to unacceptable risk factors. Concurrently, the specific sections of the regulations gives greater focus with respect to steps to be taken re production site closure and reopening.

A special color-code system of product tagging to identify products from each production zone along with vessels compartment segregation of such products is implemented. In addition, there is increased product inspection at the landing sites with the assistance of officers of the Fisheries Division aimed at improvement in traceability, product quality and safety. This process includes mandatory retrofitting of approved harvesting vessels with the relevant automatic temperature loggers and GPS tracking system. All artesian vessels working alongside these harvesting vessels are retrofitted with real-time GPS tracking systems (http://www.sasco-inc.com). This is in keeping with Schedules 1, 2&3 of the Aquaculture Inland and Marine Regulation 2000. The data can be retrieved at any time of the day and also will be verified at the time of landing. This aimed at determining final disposition of consignment to processing facilities.

Special intensive 6-months production area monitoring/sampling regime is undertaken to establish new baseline data re the true occurrence of toxic phytoplanktons, marine biotoxin, E.coli, mercury, lead, cadmium and pesticides in each of the designated zones which are considered detrimental to human health. The presence of these contaminants will be determined via analysis of conch flesh and or water samples. The CA is working in collaboration with the National Environmental Planning Agency (NEPA), Fisheries Division, Marine Institute, the Jamaica Coast Guard and facilities operators. The EU Reference Laboratory is being utilized for biotoxin determinations. The results of this monitoring will form the basis for the new zone classification system being put in place.

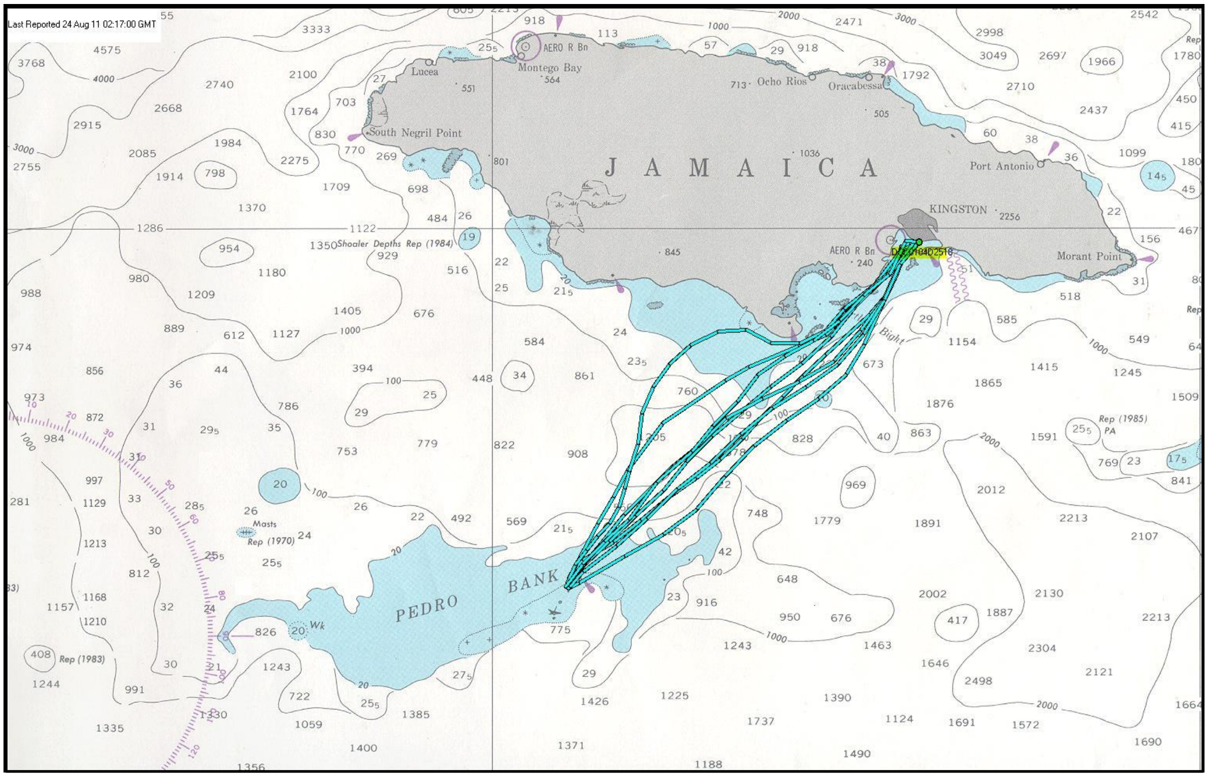
The sampling frequency for toxin analysis (DSP, ASP, PSP, Yessotoxin, Pectinotoxins, Dinophysistoxins) in molluscs is, as a general rule, to be weekly during the periods at which harvesting is allowed. This frequency may be reduced in specific areas, or for specific types of

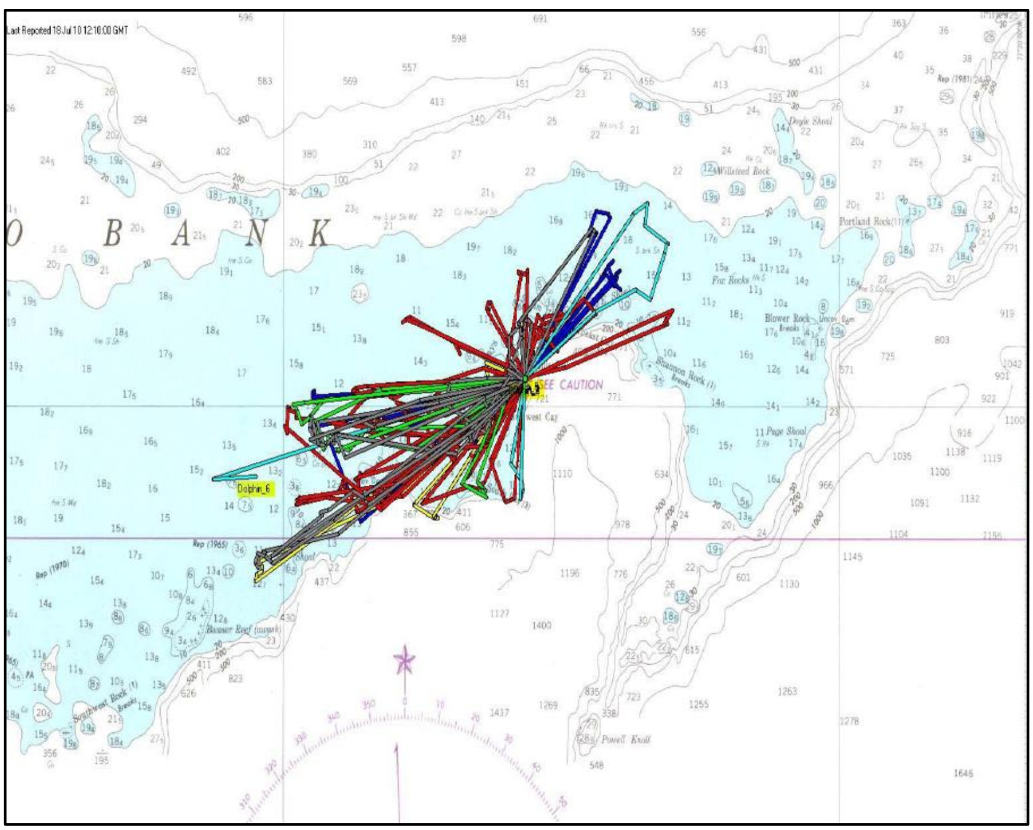
molluscs, if a risk assessment on toxins or phytoplankton occurrence suggests a very low risk of toxic episodes.

New and improved fishery production grids are now being established with the use of GPS system to facilitate accurate designation of geographical location of products harvested and to allow for improvement in sampling regime and trace back activities.

These monitoring activities are ongoing with results being used to provide safer consumable products.

Dr. Wintorph Marsden
Senior Veterinary Officer


Last Reported 24 Aug 11 02:17:00 GMT
J A M A I C A
Montego Bay
Lucea
Ocho Rios
Oracabessa
South Negril Point
Port Antonio
KINGSTON
Morant Point
AERO R Bn
Shoaler Depths Rep (1984)
PEDRO
BANK
Rep (1983)
Rep (1970)
Rep (1985)


Last Reported 18 Jul 10 12:10:00 GMT
O B A N K
Dolphin_6
SEE CAUTION
Portland Rock
Blower Rock
Page Shoal
Powell Knoll


GPSmap 492
GARMIN
PLEASE DONT SIT HERE