National Seafood Inspection Laboratory

NOAA FISHERIES

National **M**arine **F**isheries **S**ervice

Office of Sustainable Fisheries
National Seafood Inspection Laboratory
PO Drawer 1207
Pascagoula, MS 39568-1207
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OUR SEAS AND OUR SKIES
30 Years
OF EXCELLENCE AT NOAA

Mission

To provide analytical laboratory, data management, Regulatory Compliance Risk Analysis, and Information Transfer expertise to meet the Office of Sustainable Fisheries (OSF) fishery management and seafood safety responsibilities.

Background

The National Seafood Inspection Laboratory (NSIL) was established as the Regional Pascagoula Technology Station in 1957 to promote fishery development, product development of under utilized species and to conduct research in determining the nutritional value of Gulf of Mexico seafoods.

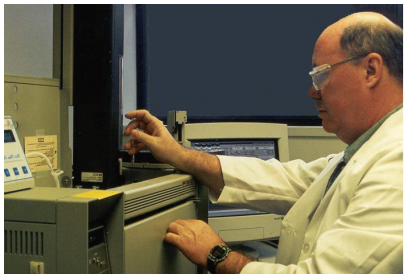
In 1974, the Laboratory was reorganized to scientifically support the Department of Commerce (DOC) National Seafood Inspection Program and soon became one of the leading seafood chemical and microbiological testing and information transfer facilities in the United States. Also, the Laboratory has provided extensive food safety and inspection training to over 500 national and international seafood inspectors from 22 countries.

The Laboratory has been on the leading edge of seafood technology and has continually developed new and unique regulatory techniques to inspect seafoods. With assistance of industry and other Federal and state agencies, the Laboratory designed the regulatory Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system of inspection. This new system has been mandated by FDA for seafood products and by USDA for all meat and poultry products. The NMFS also uses these concepts in their voluntary HACCP program for seafoods.

As a result of an Agency reorganization in 1996, NSIL has adapted its food safety risk analysis expertise to support specific fishery management and data collection programs of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries located at the NMFS Headquarters. NSIL's current activities are outlined in this brochure.

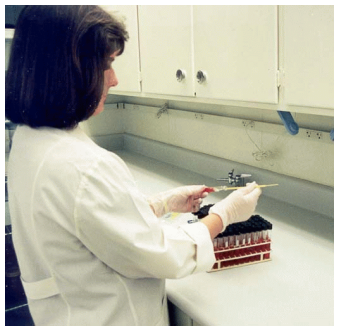
Forensic Laboratory Activities

Chemistry Analyses



Heavy Metals
Pesticides
PCBs
Sulfites
Domoic Acid
Biogentics Amines
Species Identification
Fishery Stock Genetic Identification Tissue Bank

Microbiology Analyses



Aerobic Plate Count
Coliforms
E. coli
Staphylococcus
Salmonella
Shigella
Listeria
Vibrios

Other Analyses

Parasites
Can Seams
Press Weights
Filth
Foreign Objects

Other Laboratory Activities

Seafood Safety

Risk Analysis

- Risk Assessment
- Risk Management
- Risk Communication

Seafood and Fish Meal Inspections

HACCP Evaluations

Economic Fraud Determinations

Quality Assurance

Verifying Quality Control of Laboratory Activities

Laboratory Safety

Standard Operating Procedures

Case File Management and Control

Data Management and Information Transfer

Data Acquisition/Entry/Analysis/Reporting

- Highly Migratory Species/Large Pelagics Survey
- Swordfish Import Control Program
- Patagonian Toothfish Import Control Program
- Maryland Bluefin Tuna Pilot Tagging Project
- North Carolina Tagging Project
- Highly Migratory Species Catch Estimates
- Tournament Catch Reporting

Computer System Maintenance

Scientific Training and Material Development

Audio/Visual Production

Regulatory Compliance Activities

New NSIL fishery management activities and Regulatory Compliance Risk Analysis include:

1) Managing the Agency's Swordfish and Patagonian Toothfish Import Control Programs;

2) Maintaining a large database on coast-wide Highly Migratory Species (HMS), such as swordfish, tunas, marlins, and sharks;

3) Registering and monitoring recreational fishing tournaments and rodeos for HMS other than billfish;

4) Assisting in the development of the National Observer Competency Program;

5) Initiating a new Maryland Pilot Tuna Tagging Program;

6) Developing scientific training programs and materials including audio/visual productions;

7) Providing Regulatory Compliance Risk Analysis of selected NMFS Fishery Management Regulations to categorize levels of compliance in order to provide for Agency regulatory discretion and differential enforcement level options;

8) Performing forensic laboratory investigations to determine if imported species are being intentionally mislabeled to circumvent a NMFS fishery management regulations and/or economic fraud; and

9) Conducting conflict resolution workshops.

Intra/Extramural Associations

National

NOAA/NMFS
- – Headquarters in Silver Spring, MD
- – Science Centers and Regional Laboratories

Federal Government
- – Department of State
- – Food and Drug Administration
- – Department of Agriculture
- – U.S. Customs
- – Department of Defense
- – Environmental Protection Agency
- – Gulf of Mexico Program

State Governments
- – Public Health Departments
- – Fish and Wildlife Departments

Industry

Trade Associations

Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference

Institute of Food Technologists

U.S. Animal Health Association

National Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Criteria for Foods

Academic Institutions

International

International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)

Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)

U.N. World Health Organization (WHO)

U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Codex Alimentarius International Foods Standards Program (Codex)

World Trade Organization (WTO)

European Union (EU)