



# 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual 85 Main Oyster Shuck-Off Rules & Regulations



## Oysters

Oysters provided by American Mussel Harvesters, Inc., a HACCP certified and fully integrated live oyster, mussel, and clam company that grows, harvests, packs, ships, and markets live shellfish to distributors, retailers, and seafood restaurants. Since 1986, American Mussel Harvesters, Inc. has grown into one of the largest and most successful shellfish companies in the country.

## Prizes

Shuckers will compete for a \$500 cash prize and a plaque. The second-place winner will receive a \$250 cash prize and a plaque. The third-place winner will receive \$100 cash prize and a plaque. Fourth and fifth-place winners will receive a \$50 Gift Certificate to 85 Main.

## Judges

A panel of VIP judges will be judging the competition.

## Application and Waiver Form—IMPORTANT!

Contestant must complete and submit the attached Shucker Application and Waiver Form in order to participate.

## Competitor Information

- 1 Bring your own blade.
- 2 Competitors must arrive promptly at the specified rally point before the event. Once application is submitted more information will follow.
- 3 Speed, as well as, quality of the shucked oysters are the key factors to winning this competition. You snooze, you lose.
- 4 You will be shucking a variety of Atlantic or Pacific Oysters.

## Rules and Procedures

### Administration

1. The chairman of the 85 Main Oyster shucking committee appoints officiating and clerical personnel.
  - a. Judges (Five total, one being the Chief Judge)  
Responsibilities include:
    - i. Shucking operations and the assessment of penalties appropriate to each contestant's completed tray.
    - ii. Performance evaluations and technical decisions.
  - b. Head Timekeeper
    - i. Selects and supervises timekeeping assistants.
    - ii. Confers with Chief Clerk on computing scores.
  - c. Timekeepers
    - i. Each timekeeper will time one or two shuckers based on the number of shuckers in a heat.
  - d. Chief Clerk  
Responsibilities include:
    - i. Obtaining signed waivers of liability from each contestant
    - ii. Computing each contestant's net performance score and recording these scores to include the awards conferred.

### Equipment, Performance and Judging

1. American Mussel Harvesters selects all oysters for use and supervises the placing of oysters into numbered mesh bags. Shuckers are assigned oyster bags randomly.
2. Each shucking station is identified by a number.
3. The shucker removes the oysters from his/her bag and arranges them for shucking. Shucker may appeal to the Chief Judge any oyster considered of improper quality for the contest. At his discretion the Chief Judge may substitute another oyster taken from an additional container previously provided by the judges.
4. Shuckers may wear fingerstalls or gloves, use their own knives and carry an extra knife for use in case the first breaks. ALL knives used must have been approved by the Chief Judge prior to the start of the contest. No

mechanically assisted knives will be allowed.

5. The shucker will poise his/her knife at head height to indicate readiness.
6. At a signal by the Chief Judge all timekeepers' simultaneously start their stopwatches and shuckers begin shucking.
7. Contestants place each oyster on an unbroken half-shell and arrange all neatly on the coded tray provided. Oysters should be whole, uncut and free from the shell.
8. When a contestant has completed shucking and has arranged the oysters to his/her satisfaction, he /she will raise both hands overhead and step back from the shucking table. The timekeeper will stop his watch. **Once this occurs a shucker may not touch the tray of oysters.**
9. **AESTHETIC EMPHASIS.** The zenith of an oyster is in the pleasure of its being eaten. The importance of the **PRESENTATION** is uppermost. An appetizing arrangement of a tray of shucked oysters is rewarded over a "sloppy" or "butchered" offering, which reflects concern for speed of performance. This critical attention to appearance is one of the basic criteria at the International Competition in Ireland where chefs and seafood restaurateurs are often the winning performers.

**PENALTIES.** Judges will add seconds to each contestant's shucking time according to the following penalty table:

(1)	An oyster not completely severed from its shell	Add 3 seconds
(2)	An oyster presented on a broken shell	Add 1 second
(3)	An oyster presented with grit, blood or other foreign substance on the flesh	Add 3 seconds
(4)	A cut oyster	Add 3 seconds
(5)	An oyster not placed properly on the shell	Add 2 seconds
(6)	A missing oyster	Add 20 seconds

**BONUS.** Judges may award a bonus reduction of ten (10) seconds as an award for a tray whose presentation is deemed outstanding.

10. Disqualification is rare. However, disqualification could result from a majority opinion of the Timer and Chief Judge that a contestant:
  - (1) Intentionally touched his/her oysters or tray after having signaled completion.
  - (2) Distracted a fellow competitor by vocal or physical interference during the shucking heat.
  - (3) Committed a flagrant, inexcusable impropriety during the progress of the shucking heat.

### Legal

- 1 Judges' decisions are final.
- 2 The odds of winning depend upon the number of entries received.
- 3 All income taxes are the responsibility of the winner(s).

It is the sole responsibility of the winner(s) to provide 85 Main with their contact information including their full name, telephone number(s), mailing address, and email address (if available) in order to provide the winner(s) with their prize(s) if such prize(s) was not claimed during the 85 Main Shuck-Off.

### **QUESTIONS?**

**Contact James Martin at 860-928-1660  
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