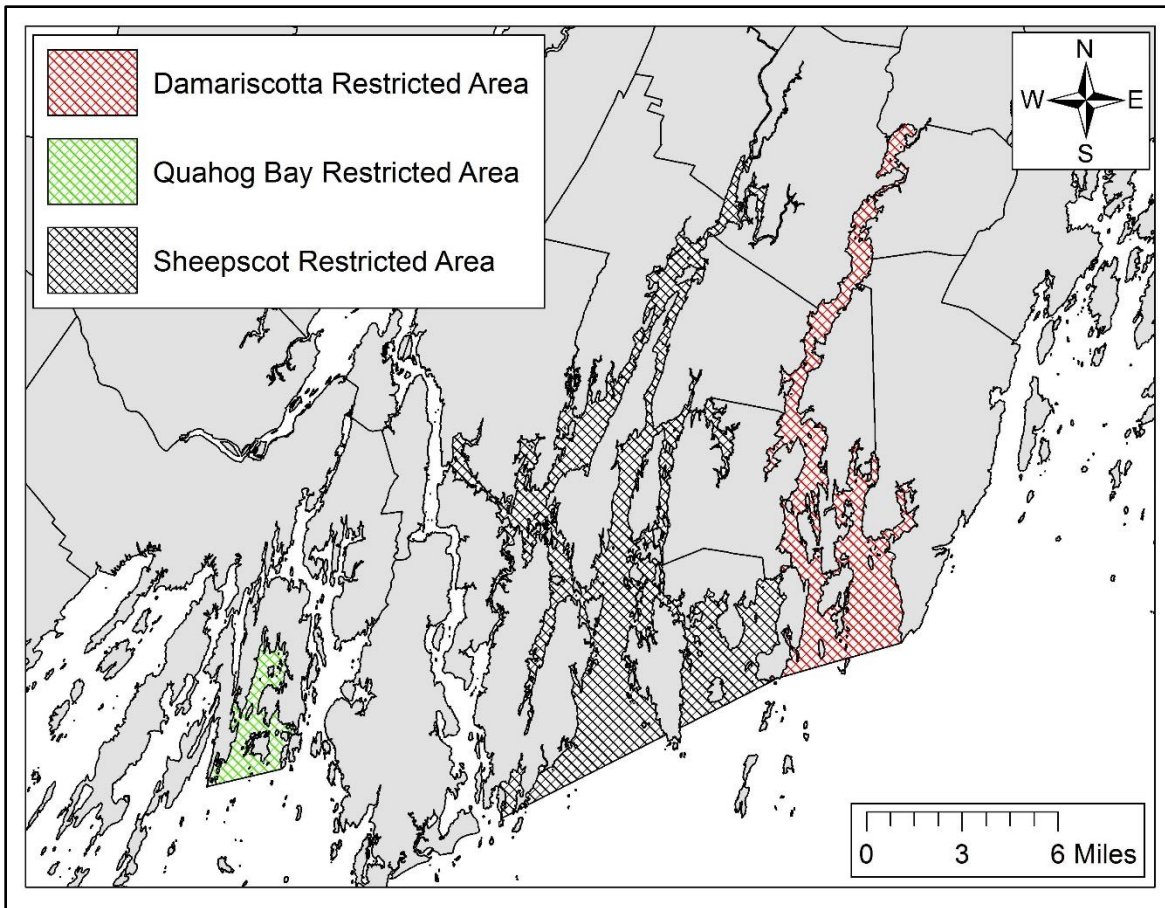


Maine Department of Marine Resources  
American Oyster Restricted Areas  
MDMR Rules Chapter 24.10(4)(F)



The Maine Department of Marine Resources Rule Chapter 24.10(4)(F) restricts the movement of American oysters (*Crassostrea virginica*) in certain state waters due to the detection of the protozoan parasite MSX (*Haplosporidium nelsoni*). This restriction does not prohibit harvest but does restrict the introduction of oysters from this area to other water bodies within the state, including for wet storage. Based on our current knowledge, MSX is limited in its distribution within Maine. No hatcheries operating in Maine have tested positive for MSX to date.

MSX is specific only to American and Pacific oysters; it is not known to affect other marine species. **Furthermore, it is not a human health concern. Oysters are safe for human consumption and remain in good condition very close to death.**

MSX caused heavy oyster mortalities in the Damariscotta River in 2010 and was detected in the Upper Sheepscot River Estuary (Marsh River) in 2013 and in Quahog Bay in 2020. While MSX-related mortalities are relatively new to Maine, the parasite has been present throughout

southern New England and the Mid-Atlantic states for decades. It was first discovered in Delaware Bay in 1957 and then Chesapeake Bay two years later.

As a reminder, product from out-of-state or from restricted areas within Maine (i.e. the Damariscotta and Sheepscot Rivers, and Quahog Bay) may not be re-submerged, wet stored or placed in flow through systems elsewhere in the state without a permit from MDMR. **Re-submergence, wet storage and/or storage in a flow through system of oysters from out of state or from an area restricted due to the detection of shellfish pathogens may cause the spread of those pathogens.**

The Department's Chapter 24 rules are available at the following address:

<https://www.maine.gov/dmr/laws-regulations/regulations/index.html>

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