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The Resources Agency
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CALIFORNIA SHELLFISH IMPORTATION AND PLANTING REPORT
1975-1976 SEASON

by

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ABSTRACT

The amount of shellfishes imported and planted in State waters is enumerated by species and compared with the previous season. Total giant Pacific oyster seed shipments were equivalent to 5,249 standard cases, compared with 11,884 standard cases the previous season. Sources of these seed oysters were Japan, Washington State and British Columbia, Canada. Adult Eastern oyster shipments from New York State totaled 442 bushels.

1/ Marine Resources Administrative Report No. 77-1, January, 1977.

2/ Marine Resources Region, 411 Burgess Drive, Menlo Park, California 94025.

CALIFORNIA SHELLFISH IMPORTATION
and
PLANTING REPORT
1975-1976 SEASON

Shellfish importations for planting in California waters during the period July 1, 1975 through June 30, 1976, included shipments of giant Pacific oyster seed, Crassostrea gigas, from Japan, Washington State, and British Columbia, Canada. These shipments were equivalent to a total of 5,249 standard cases. Also included were 7 shipments totaling 442 bushel sacks of adult Eastern oysters, Crassostrea virginica, from New York State.

JAPANESE OYSTER SEED

Arrangements to inspect giant Pacific oyster seed in Japan were made with a Washington Department of Fisheries biologist. He inspected an average of 6.1% of the California shipment of seed equivalent to 1,760 standard cases. No drills or drill-egg cases were found in the pack. The seed were packed during the last part of February and the first part of March. They were loaded in Shiogama, Japan on March 13. The ship arrived in Hoquiam, Washington on March 24 and the seed arrived by truck in California on March 27. No seed were imported from Japan last season and only 1,330 standard cases were imported during the 1973-1974 season. Lack of natural caught seed in Washington State during the past season prompted some of the seed buyers to turn to the Japan source.

WASHINGTON STATE

Six truckloads of giant Pacific oyster seed, equivalent to 1,395 standard cases from a private hatchery at Poulsbo, were shipped to California during July and August 1975. These seed-bearing shells were inspected in California by the Department's Marine Resources Region biologists. Last season 1,090 standard cases came from the same source, and 10,794 standard cases from a natural catch came from Quilcene, Washington.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

A total of 837-1/2 bundles of giant Pacific oyster seed was shipped from Pendrell Sound, Canada. The shipment was barged to Olympia, Washington and then moved to Morro Bay by refrigerated truck.

These bundles were composed of coated (resin dipped) veneer slats with seed attached. There were 72 slats per bundle. Based on seed counts, the 837-1/2 bundles were equivalent to 2,108 standard cases. Inspection revealed that a considerable amount of starfishes, Pisaster spp., was attached to the slats along with the seed. Biologist Richard Burge estimated that there were approximately 300,000 small (quarter size) starfishes in the shipment. Although most of the starfishes were dead or dying, the bundles on the bottom of the truck revealed a mixture of dead and live starfishes. Therefore, the shipment did not pass inspection and was condemned until the starfishes were removed or treated. The company decided to air-dry the bundles by placing them above the high-water mark along the bay. Inspection, after 3 nights and 2 days of drying, revealed no live starfishes or other oyster predators. The oyster seed appeared in good condition at that time.

NEW YORK STATE

Seven shipments totaling 442 bushel sacks of adult Eastern oysters were inspected at San Francisco. These oysters originated from Greenport, Long Island, New York. Inspection and planting certificates were issued and the oysters were put in the waters of Tomales Bay.

MISCELLANEOUS SHELLFISH

A small shipment of 250 adult European flat oysters, Ostrea edulis, was imported by one company from a laboratory near Kesenuma, Japan. These oysters were to be used as spawning stock in a shellfish hatchery at Moss Landing.

EXPERIMENTAL STUDIES

Growth and survival experiments in Humboldt Bay and Drakes Estero have continued with first, second, and third generation giant Pacific oyster seed. These seed were obtained by spawning mortality resistant oysters of 6 to 10 years of age and setting the seed at the Department's Granite Canyon Marine Culture Laboratory. Growth rates and mortality are being compared with commercial oysters of about the same age and the same growing location. Growth rates are slightly better for the commercial oysters at Drakes Estero. Mortalities have been light for both the experimental and commercial oysters.

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