

**Application for Food Alliance Certification:**

**Farmed Shellfish Producers**[[1]](#footnote-1)

(Manila Clams, Geoducks, Mussels, Oysters)

Food Alliance

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Portland, OR 97286

(503) 267-4667

[www.foodalliance.org](http://www.foodalliance.org)

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**Application Instructions**

Greetings and welcome to the Food Alliance certification program. Food Alliance accepts applications on a continuous basis. However, inspections will only be scheduled when conditions allow for full inspection of production areas, as determined by the Food Alliance Certification Manager and site inspectors.

**Step 1:**

Review Food Alliance Sustainability Standard for Farmed Shellfish and corresponding Evaluation Tools available on Food Alliance website: [www.foodalliance.org](http://www.foodalliance.org)/shellfish. Contact Food Alliance if you have questions about how specific criteria may apply to your operation. (See contact information below.)

**Step 2:**

Review and complete this Application.

**Step 3:**

Mail:

* Your Completed Application; and
* A payment of $750, which includes a $400 deposit towards inspection costs and an application processing charge. The check or money order should be made payable to Food Alliance.

Mail to: Food Alliance

P.O. Box 1004

Carnation, WA 98014

**Step 4:**

Host a Food Alliance inspection. Food Alliance will confirm the receipt of your completed application, and your application will be assigned to one of our qualified shellfish inspectors. The assigned inspector will contact you to set up an inspection visit. If you have questions, or require any additional information, please contact:

Food Alliance

(503) 481-0271

[certification@foodalliance.org](mailto:matt@foodalliance.org)

**Food Alliance Certified Producer Fee Structure**

All Food Alliance certified producers are inspected once every three (3) years. Inspection and certification fees are assessed as follows.

**Independent Producers**

Independent producers pay both inspection fees and licensing fees. Inspection fees include the actual cost of inspection (inspector time and travel expenses - which may vary depending upon the location, number of facilities, number of production lines, etc.) and a processing charge of $350 which covers review of applications, coordination of the inspection, review of inspection reports, and the recommendation for certification. A payment of $750, which includes a $400 deposit towards inspection costs and the processing charge, is due at time of application. The check should be made payable to Food Alliance. The remaining balance for inspection expenses will be invoiced upon issue of the certification decision.

Independent producers also pay a certification/licensing fee to Food Alliance. The percentage is based on a sliding scale:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Gross Sales** | **Percentage** |
| First $150,000 | 0.4% or $200  whichever is greater |
| Next $150,000 | 0.2% |
| Sales above $300,000 | 0.1% |

The certification/licensing fee paid to Food Alliance is applicable to the upcoming year. The fee can be billed at the beginning of the certification term or quarterly.

**Cooperatives and Producer Groups**

Food Alliance certified cooperatives and producer groups aggregate sales to calculate a single combined certification/licensing fee using the same scale listed above for independent producers.

**For a cooperative/producer group to become Food Alliance certified:**

* Each individual farm must complete and submit a Food Alliance application;
* The cooperative/producer group must estimate gross annual sales and submit an initial certification/licensing fee; and
* All the farms within the co-op/producer group covered by this certification/licensing fee must be identified.

**Contract Producers**

Producers growing for contracts that require Food Alliance certification pay the actual cost of the inspection; however, they do not pay the certification/licensing fee. These producers are not allowed to label products or assert a claim of Food Alliance certification outside the contract.

**The Certification Process**

**Review Food Alliance Evaluation Criteria**

Evaluation criteria are available on the Food Alliance website: [www.foodalliance.org/certification/producer](http://www.foodalliance.org/certification/producer). Producer certification includes a Whole Farm Evaluation and a crop/livestock-specific evaluation. Please review all relevant evaluation criteria and contact Food Alliance if you want hard copies of these documents.

**Complete the Application**

Responses to questions in the application must be sufficiently detailed to allow Food Alliance certification staff and inspectors to easily understand the ways in which your management and production practices meet Food Alliance evaluation criteria. All information provided in the application is strictly confidential.

**Site Inspection**

A site inspection is conducted by an independent, third party, Food Alliance trained professional. Site inspectors have significant education and work experience in the production systems they are sent to evaluate. They know what to look for and what questions to ask. Be prepared to show your inspector production records, landscape features, production areas, and facilities. Please arrange for farm employees to be available for the inspector to interview about workplace policies. You and/or your staff can expect the inspector to ask questions about production practices, management strategies, and workplace issues. All information and observations made during the site inspection are strictly confidential.

**Reporting**

Site inspectors use evaluation criteria created by Food Alliance to score your operation during the evaluation process. Once the site inspector has reviewed your application and performed an on-site inspection, s/he reports back to Food Alliance on the degree (score) to which your operation meets Food Alliance evaluation criteria. A Food Alliance reviewer thoroughly reviews the inspection reports and renders a certification decision. A summary inspection report and an inspection response form are issued if scores are passing. The inspection response form lists certification conditions, if applicable, and suggestions for continual improvement. The response form must be completed, returned, and approved by Food Alliance prior to certification being issued. All information discussed in the reporting process is strictly confidential.

**Certification**

When Food Alliance determines all certification requirements are met, your operation will be certified for a three -year term. You will receive a letter outlining the dates of the certification term and the products for which your operation is certified. The Food Alliance Handbook/User’s Manual which explains the rules for using the Food Alliance certification seal and terms for marketing your operation and/or products as “Food Alliance Certified” are available at FoodAlliance.org. At the end of the three -year certification term, you will be sent a renewal application to initiate the certification renewal process.

**Annual Update**

Each year, Food Alliance may send certified producers an annual update form in which they are asked to report on their continual improvement goals, any unforeseen changes in production practices, or any special problems or successes encountered during the season. (See the application and the “Continual Improvement” fixed criteria.) The annual update allows Food Alliance to certify producers for a three-year term instead of the typical one-year term.

**Spot-Check**

Food Alliance reserves the right to conduct off-schedule visits (prior to the end of the three-year certification term) to ensure certification program requirements are being followed on a consistent basis.

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

***Is the information I provide in my application or during the site inspection made available to anyone else?***

No. All documentation and information obtained during the certification process is held in strict confidentiality. Food Alliance will not discuss applications or individual certification processes with any individual or government agency. Only those individuals involved in the certification program, including Food Alliance staff and site inspectors, will have access to application records and documents.

***Do I have to be present during the site visit?***

Yes. We ask that all decision makers be present at the time of the site inspection. In addition, we recommend the following to prepare for a site visit:

* Make sure you have ample time for the inspection. It is important that managers are present as well as the person responsible for recordkeeping. It is also important that employees are available for the inspector to interview regarding Safe & Fair Working Conditions criteria. Site inspections typically take from four to six hours depending on the size/acreage of the operation or number of production sites evaluated.
* Have records ready to show site inspector. This includes, but is not limited to, pesticide/herbicide records, federal/state/regional permits or licenses, scouting records, harvest records, and written management plans.
* Be prepared to describe your strategies as they relate to Food Alliance evaluation criteria. Take time to fully review the evaluation criteria for the type of production you wish to certify. All Food Alliance evaluation criteria are accessible on the Food Alliance website. Hard copies can be mailed upon request.
* Be prepared to walk or drive around your property to show crop production areas, hazardous material/pesticide storage areas, post-harvest handling areas and equipment, machinery, significant vantage points, riparian areas, and other aspects of your operation relevant to the evaluation criteria.

***What’s the Food Alliance Site Inspectors process?***

Food Alliance has developed detailed evaluation documents for their inspectors to use. These documents are designed to verify on-farm practices and provide consistency in evaluations performed by multiple inspectors. Qualifications for site inspectors include expertise working in production agriculture or research, educational background in agriculture, and significant knowledge of sustainable/conservation agriculture management for the specific production systems they are inspecting.

***How long will the application process take?***

The application and certification processes generally take 8 to 12 weeks. This timeframe may be extended if applications are received during times of the year when site conditions are not conducive to conducting site inspections as determined by Food Alliance. The typical timeframe from time of inspection to a certification decision being issued is 5 to 6 weeks.

***I have more than one farm or production area and/or have leased or rented land. Do I need to submit more than one application?***

If multiple production units are under uniform management regimes and/or share the same infrastructure, a single application is generally accepted. The Food Alliance Certification Manager will work with the applicant to collect the necessary information to determine if more than one application is required.

***What happens if I don’t pass?***

If an applicant’s operation doesn’t meet the criteria for certification, Food Alliance will give the applicant one year to make changes in practices and procedures. Along with a denial of certification letter, the applicant will be provided with a detailed listing of changes that are suggested to meet Food Alliance certification criteria. When the applicant has made the suggested changes and wishes to be re-inspected, s/he must submit a written request for re-inspection to Food Alliance, along with a summary of changes that have been implemented since the initial inspection and any supporting documentation.

If a re-inspection is requested within one year of filing the initial application, a new application is not required. Re-inspection of the operation will focus on deficiencies found during the initial inspection. While re-inspection will generally take less time than the initial inspection, the applicant is responsible for covering the “at-cost” expense of the re-inspection.

***How will I benefit from Food Alliance certification?***

Participants benefit from the certification program in a variety of ways, depending on the crops or food items they produce and their skill in marketing products as Food Alliance certified. Benefits include, but are not limited to:

* **Access to New Markets:** Food Alliance has helped many producers gain market access by facilitating relationships with retailers, manufacturers, and processors who support Food Alliance’s mission.
* **Retain or Increase Market Share:** Food Alliance certification helps producers and retailers alike hold on to or expand their business opportunities. Food Alliance certification has helped producers shift their business and marketing efforts to take advantage of the rapidly growing marketplace trend toward environmentally and socially responsible food products.
* **Improved Public Perception:** Food Alliance certification helps agricultural businesses project an image of social and environmental responsibility grounded in a rigorous and widely respected program. Program participants often receive media coverage, and benefit from emerging customer loyalty based on the Food Alliance certification seal.
* **Product Differentiation:** Food Alliance certification differentiates products in a crowded marketplace. Food Alliance certification is an inexpensive way to build value and brand identity in your products.
* **Price Premiums:** Food Alliance certification has helped some producers obtain a price premium.

***Who creates the evaluation criteria for the Food Alliance certification program?***

Food Alliance works with researchers, industry experts, and consultants to create and revise evaluation criteria which are used to evaluate adherence to Food Alliance standards for sustainable agriculture. The practices and concepts found in the evaluation criteria generally come from “best management practices” developed by public agencies and land grant universities. When creating evaluation criteria, the goal is to have producers provide input wherever possible, including testing the standards on their operations. Additionally, Food Alliance maintains a Stewardship Council comprised of crop and livestock producers, consumer group representatives, scientists, farm labor representatives, and environmentalists who provide input to the evaluation criteria development process.

***How were Food Alliance certification standards for shellfish developed?***

The first step was securing the resources necessary to create the standards, evaluation criteria and certification infrastructure. Food Alliance secured grants from the Keith Campbell Foundation, Wildlife Forever Fund, and the Russell Family Foundation for this purpose. The shellfish evaluation criteria were developed in collaboration with Andrew D. Suhrbier, Senior Biologist with the Pacific Shellfish Institute, Olympia, WA.

The following individuals reviewed and provided comment on the evaluation criteria\*\*:

* Lisa Bishop, Little Skookum Shellfish
* Colin Brannen, Aquaculture Program Officer, World Wildlife Fund;
* Dr. Dan Cheney, Senior Scientist, Pacific Shellfish Institute;
* John Finger, Hog Island Oyster Co.
* Dr. Becky Goldburg, Director of Marine Science, Pew Environmental Group, Pew Memorial Trust;
* Brian Kingzett, Blue Revolution Consulting Group;
* Marco Pinchot, Community Relations and Sustainability Manager, Taylor Shellfish Co.;
* John Lentz, Chelsea Farms, LLC.
* Dr. Sandy Shumway, University of Connecticut, Department of Marine Sciences;

\*\* Not all reviewer comments and suggestions were incorporated in the final draft of these evaluation criteria, so recognition of their contribution does not constitute an endorsement.

***How do I know Food Alliance shellfish certification is right for my operation?***

Food Alliance certification best suits producers and handlers who: 1) actively manage their operations with environmental and community impacts in mind; 2) have a commitment to continually strive to innovate and do better; and 3) wish to differentiate their company and its products in the marketplace through thoughtful marketing that highlights their sustainable practices.

Producers and handlers interested in pursuing Food Alliance certification should understand that certification is a tool that helps add credibility to their sustainability claims through outside verification to meaningful standards. Shellfish growers and handlers who have wholesale, restaurant, and retail customers interested in sustainability will be well positioned to satisfy growing needs with Food Alliance Certified products.

***What is the certification process for Food Alliance Certified shellfish operations and products?***

Shellfish producers interested in pursuing Food Alliance Certification should first read the Food Alliance Producer Standards and Procedures. They should also become familiar with the Whole Shellfish Inspection Tool and species-specific inspection tools (clams, oysters, mussels, and/or geoducks). These materials are available at: [www.foodalliance.org/shellfish](http://www.foodalliance.org/shellfish).

Once prospective Food Alliance Certified shellfish producers are familiar with the various standards and inspection tools, and feel that certification is right for their operation, they should complete an application. Shellfish producer application materials are available at: [www.foodalliance.org/shellfish](http://www.foodalliance.org/shellfish)

After we review a producer's application, Food Alliance will forward the documents to an independent, third-party inspector who will contact the operation to schedule a site inspection. During the inspection, the inspector will tour the operation, interview managers and key staff, and review relevant records to evaluate performance using the Whole Shellfish and species-specific inspection tools.

After the site visit, the inspector submits inspection reports (including all pertinent inspection tools) to Food Alliance. Food Alliance reviews the site report and sends the applicant an inspection summary report listing their evaluation scores, and an inspection response form listing certification conditions (if issued) and suggestions for improvement. When the applicant’s responses are approved by Food Alliance, certification is granted, and a certification letter issued. Once certification is granted, the Food Alliance Certified producer must maintain certification and use it to market their certified products. The term of certification for shellfish producers is three years. The term of certification for processors and distributors is one year. The official start date will be specified in the certification letter along with the products that may be labeled as Food Alliance Certified.

***Does my handling facility need to be inspected and certified by Food Alliance?***

A Food Alliance inspection is required for any shellfish packing or processing facility ("handling" facility) preparing and selling Food Alliance Certified products. Handling facilities that change the form of live shellfish (i.e., shucking, smoking, cooking) must apply for Food Alliance's handling operation program and achieve either Food Alliance handler certification or restricted handler approval. These shellfish handlers must undergo a similar process as producers. The Handler manual and application materials can be found at: <http://foodalliance.org/certification/handler/certification-process>.

If a shellfish handling facility is simply cleaning and packaging the live product and it has a traceability and labeling system in place that ensures commingling of Food Alliance Certified and non-certified products does not occur, inspection of that facility may be included as part of the farm inspection and a separate handling operation application and inspection is NOT required. For more information, contact Food Alliance at (503) 481-0271 or certification@foodalliance.org.

***Do shellfish producers, handlers, and products display a different seal that other Food Alliance Certified operators? If so, how are they used?***

Yes. The Food Alliance Certified shellfish seal is displayed to the right. Guidance on how to display and use the seals can be found in the Food Alliance certification user guide. The guide is part of the Food Alliance Handbook, available online at: www.foodalliance.org/resources/marketing.

***Does Food Alliance certification address food safety for shellfish?***

In the United States, shellfish farming is already governed under the National Shellfish Sanitation Program. These standards include regular monitoring for fecal coliform bacteria (as an indicator for potential pathogens in the water), vibrio diseases, harmful algal toxins, heavy metals and other contaminants.

As a sustainable agriculture certification, Food Alliance challenges certified businesses to assess and manage a wide variety of risks to human and environmental health. Several certification criteria such as the expectation that workers have access to sanitary restrooms and hand-washing facilities contribute directly to food safety. Many others, such as criteria designed to prevent animal waste or agricultural chemicals from entering the water supply, serve human and environmental health more broadly.

In addition to certifying farms and ranches, Food Alliance also certifies food handling operations including packers, processors, and distributors. That certification process includes verification that handlers have plans and programs in place to help ensure food safety.

***What are the environmental impacts of shellfish aquaculture?***

Practiced responsibly, shellfish aquaculture can itself be environmentally beneficial. Shellfish remove nitrogen, phosphate and other nutrients from the water as they feed. A single oyster can filter as much as 120 liters of water each day and an acre of cultivated oysters can offset the nitrogenous wastes of 50 households. Shellfish also help offset carbon dioxide emissions by incorporating carbon in their shells.

Properly managed, shellfish aquaculture can also enhance habitat diversity thereby benefiting a variety of organisms. Researchers have found that there is greater diversity and richness of species in sea beds with shellfish farming gear than in bare seabed or seabed habitat with eelgrass. Recent National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration funded research found that mussel culture lines support more than 100 invertebrate species and shiner perch and juvenile Pacific herring are seasonally concentrated in this habitat.

Tidelands that support shellfish aquaculture also provide critical foraging habitat for a large variety of water birds. Researchers have found that the population and diversity of 7 of 13 shorebirds and 3 of 4 wading birds was greater in tidelands with cultivated oyster beds. However, shellfish aquaculture can also have negative environmental impacts. Identified risks include ecosystem integrity (with affects on surrounding habitat and the ecological community), disease and pest management (with potential for disease and pest transfer, pathogen loading, and use of chemical treatments), waste management (with lost gear and related debris, chemicals, and organic waste; processing of wastes; treatment of effluent; and maintenance of equipment), and multi-use issues (location, development, and aesthetics of aquaculture sites and conflicts with other resource users).

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| **General Information** | | | | | |
| **Business Name:** | | | | | |
| **Business Name: (es) of all sites:** | |  | | | |
| **Mailing Address (if different from above):** | |  | | | |
| **Primary Phone:** | | | **Fax:** | | |
| **Email Address:** | | | Website: | | |
| **Type of Business:**  Individual  Individual “doing business as”:   General Partnership. Names of Owners/Partners:    Corporation Name of President: | | | | | |
| **Does your operation hold any other certifications?**  Yes  No If yes, please specify: | | | | | |
| **Primary Certification Contact:** The person listed below will be the Primary Certification Contact. The person acting as the primary certification contact must have knowledge of the operation’s management practices, and by being listed here, will have access to any information contained in the Food Alliance application. The primary certification contact will be the individual to receive all certification related correspondence. | | | | | |
| **Name of Primary Contact Responsible for Certification:** | | | | | |
| **Title:** | | **Phone:** | | **Email Address:** | |
| **Mailing Address  (if different from above):** | |  | | | |
| **Additional Contacts:** Additional people may be named as contacts for Food Alliance or inspectors regarding this file, or during the inspection and certification process. These contacts may be consultants, managers, employees, administrative assistants, etc. | | | | | |
| **Name** | **Job Title** | | **Phone Number** | | **Authorized to speak on behalf of this company?** |
|  |  | |  | | YES |
|  |  | |  | | YES |
|  |  | |  | | YES |

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| **Background Information** |
| How did you find out about Food Alliance certification? |
| Please tell us what motivated you to seek Food Alliance certification, and how you intend to use the certification (e.g., buyer requested certification, meeting customer requests, etc.). |
| Please describe the history of your operation, and how you learned to produce farmed shellfish. |

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| **Sales and Marketing Information** | | | |
| **1. Who will be the person responsible for marketing your operation’s Food Alliance Certified products?** | | | |
| **Primary marketing contact:** | | | |
| **Title:** | **Phone:** | | **Email Address:** |
| Mailing Address  (if different from above): |  | | |
| **2. Please list the nursery products on which you are seeking Food Alliance certification and related sales and marketing information:** | | | |
| **Clams** | | **Approx. Annual sales volume:** **0** | |
| **Brand(s) product is marketed under:** | | | |
| **How is the item packaged for sale? (e.g., boxes, bags, etc.) and/or Primary sales outlets for these products (e.g., wholesale, retail, etc.):** | | | |
| **Oysters** | | **Approx. Annual sales volume:** **$0.00** | |
| **Brand(s) product is marketed under:** | | | |
| **How is the item packaged for sale? (e.g., boxes, bags, etc.) and/or Primary sales outlets for these products (e.g., wholesale, retail, etc.):** | | | |
| **Geoducks** | | **Approx. Annual sales volume:** **$0.00** | |
| **Brand(s) product is marketed under:** | | | |
| **How is the item packaged for sale? (e.g., boxes, bags, etc.) and/or Primary sales outlets for these products (e.g., wholesale, retail, etc.):** | | | |
| **Mussels** | | **Approx. Annual sales volume:** **$0.00** | |
| **Brand(s) product is marketed under:** | | | |
| **How is the item packaged for sale? (e.g., boxes, bags, etc.) and/or Primary sales outlets for these products (e.g., wholesale, retail, etc.):** | | | |

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| **Production and Post-harvest Handling** | | | | | |
| **1. What is the total acreage of your farming operation (including both production areas and uplands)?** | | | | | |
| **Total acres:**  **Acres owned:**  **Acres rented or leased:** | | | | | |
| **2. How many production sites do you manage?** | | | | | |
| **Number of sites:** | | | | | |
| **Please provide a description of the proximity of the various production areas to each other, and/or approximate travel time between the various production sites:** | | | | | |
| **3. Of your total acreage, how many are in…?** | | | | | |
| **Total acres in shellfish production:** | | | | | |
| **Acres of:**  Geoducks:  Manila Clams:  Oysters:  Mussels: | **Seeking certification?** | **Avg. Annual Yield:** | | | |
| Acres of woodland:  Acres of wetlands:  Miles of streams:  Acres of ponds or lakes:  Acres in CRP, WRP, CREP or other conservation programs (please specify):  Acres of other (please specify): | | | | | |
| **4. Licenses, Permits, and Other Third-Party Inspections and Certifications** | | | | | |
| Is your shellfish operation inspected by any local, state, and/or federal regulators (USDA, FDA, state agriculture department, state environmental agency, etc.)? | | | YES | NO | |
| If you answered YES above, please list regulators and write the date of the last inspection and attach a copy of the last inspection report with your application. | | | | | |
| **5. Is your nursery operation required to maintain any local, state and/or federal licenses or permits?** | | | YES | NO | |
| If you answered YES above, please list licenses/permits below and attach a copy current licenses/permits with your application. | | | | | |
| **6. Has your shellfish operation ever been in violation of any state/local/federal license requirements or regulations?** | | | YES | NO | |
| If you answered YES above, please explain. | | | | | |
| **7. Does your operation have a written Food Safety Program in place (GAP, HACCP, etc.)?** | | | YES | NO | |
| If you answered YES above, please indicate if your operation has undergone a 3rd party food safety audit (e.g. GAP, Silliker, AIB, etc.) | | | YES | NO | |
| If you answered YES above, please specify auditing agency. Please also attach a copy of your most recent audit report. | | | | | |
| **8. Please explain any post-harvest handling, on-farm handling or processing procedures that take place on your operation.** | | | | | |
| **(Include a listing of any sanitation chemicals used on product or food contact surfaces, if applicable.)** | | | | | |
| **9. Do you handle any products NOT PRODUCED on your farm?** | | | YES | NO (Skip to next section) |
| **If you answered YES above, please specify:** | | | | |
| **10. Do you handle or pack products from other non-Food Alliance Certified producers?** | | | YES | NO, the other producers are Food Alliance Certified/will be applying for certification. | |
| If you answered YES above, please explain how you ensure Food Alliance Certified products are not commingled with non-Food Alliance Certified products during handling and packing/labeling. | | | | | |

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| **Farm Maps/Aerial Photos of Production Sites and Upland Areas** |
| Please sketch below or attach a map of your operation. Include: perimeter, production areas, upland areas (which you manage or have control over) adjacent land uses, bodies of water, drainage patterns, roads, outbuildings, post-harvest handling or processing areas, pesticide/hazardous material storage areas, natural areas/woodland/habitat areas, riparian areas, and any other information you feel is pertinent to your operation. Maps may also be available from the following websites:  **Google Earth:** <http://www.google.com/earth> |
| **Please identify the following features on your maps:** |
| * **Structural Features:**Property boundary(s), production areas (fields, pastures, etc.), outbuildings, pesticide/hazardous material storage areas, family & employee housing, post-harvest handling or processing areas. * **Environmentally Sensitive and/or Erosion-Prone Areas:**Bodies of water, drainages, riparian areas, steeply sloped areas, wetlands, adjacent land uses sensitive to production practices, buffer & filter strips, terraces, etc. * **Integrated Pest & Weed Management Information:** Areas subject to high potential pesticide/herbicide losses, areas of invasive weeds, areas with high pest pressures, or potential access for pests. * **Wildlife Habitat & Biodiversity Conservation Areas:**Woodland/natural areas, hedgerows, ponds, streams, fallow fields, food plots, predator and pollinator habitat. Please also identify the following, as is applicable to your operation.   + Areas of high biodiversity value (priority habitats such as wetland or remnant prairie; habitat for or presence of threatened or endangered species, connectivity to larger natural areas, water resources).   + Problem areas: threats to native biodiversity, including areas of invasive weeds or high erosion.   + Relevant features including natural areas, restoration projects, public lands, etc. |

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| **Fixed Evaluation Criteria** | | | | | | |
| Food Alliance Fixed Criteria are uniformly applied to all crop and livestock operations applying for Food Alliance certification. While it is recognized that some of the following practices are not currently used in shellfish production, we ask that you please confirm that your operation meets these fixed criteria. | | | | | | |
| **1. No GMO breeds are used; no cloned animals are used.  (Triploid animals are not considered GMO, as no genes are introduced.)** | | | | | | |
| **Check the following as applicable:**  There are no GMO breeds or cloned animals produced on the farm.  GMO breeds and/or cloned animals are produced on the farm, but they are not produced or sold as a Food Alliance Certified product. | | | | | | |
| If GMO or cloned animals are produced on the farm, please list them here: | | | | | | |
| **2. No growth-promoting hormones or other growth promotants used.** | | | | | | |
| **Check the following as applicable:**  Growth-promoting hormones or other growth promotants are not used in shellfish production on the farm.  Growth-promoting hormones or other growth promotants are used on the farm. | | | | | | |
| If growth-promoting hormones or other growth promotants are used, please specify: | | | | | | |
| **3. No antibiotics are used** | | | | | | |
| **Check the following as applicable:**  Antibiotics are not used in shellfish production on the farm.  Antibiotics are used on the farm. | | | | | | |
| If antibiotics are used, please list antibiotics and describe how they are administered: | | | | | | |
| **4. Shellfish-specific fixed criteria: Shellfish intended for further grow out, hardening or relay may only be moved from one farm to another if both operations are Food Alliance Certified** | | | | | | |
| **Check the following as applicable:**  Shellfish are not moved between farms.  Shellfish are moved between farms, and both farms are Food Alliance Certified.  Shellfish are moved between farms and not all farms are Food Alliance Certified. | | | | | | |
| **5. Continual Improvement** | | | | | | |
| Food Alliance Certified producers are required to set goals and assess their progress toward these goals by monitoring for impacts of decisions on their operation, family, employees and the environment.  **I am committed to continually improving the management practices of my farm in the interest of environmental health, farm worker welfare and the overall success of my business.** | | | | | | |
| **6. No prohibited pesticides used** | | | | | | |
| Participants in Food Alliance’s certification program may not use the following pesticides (in decreasing order of acute toxicity): (Criteria for Prohibition: Laboratory tests results—as supplied to the US EPA for product registration—show the LD50 for acute mammalian toxicity is 30 mg/kg or lower.)  **Please check any of the following pesticides currently used on your farm.** | | | | | | |
| **Check If Used** | **Active Ingredient** | **Chemical Class** | **Use\*** | **Acute Toxicity**  **LD50  (mg/kg)** | **Common Trade Names** | **Common Manufacturer** |
|  | Aldicarb | Carbamate | I | 0.5 | Temik. | Rhone-Poulenc Ag. Co. |
|  | Phorate | Organophosphate (OP) | I | 2 | Phorate 10G, Rampart, Thimet. | American Cyanamid Co. |
|  | Terbufos | OP | I | 2 | Counter. | American Cyanamid Co. |
|  | Disulfoton | OP | I | 3 | Disyston, Disystox. | Sanex, Inc. |
|  | methyl Parathion | OP | I | 6 | Parathion, Metaphos, Penncap-M | Drexel Chemical Company |
|  | Oxamyl | Carbamate | I,N | 6 | Blade, Oxamil, Vydate | DuPont Agricultural Products |
|  | Ethyl Parathion | OP | I | 6.8 | Niran or Phoskil | Cheminova |
|  | Carbofuran | Carbamate | I | 8 | Furadan, Rampart. | FMC Corporation |
|  | Methyl bromide | Not available | I | 15 | Brom-o-Gas, Bromomethane | (Agriliance) |
|  | Fenamiphos | OP | N | 15 | Nemacur, Phenamiphos,and formulations | Miles, Inc. |
|  | Azinphos-methyl | OP | I | 16 | Guthion | Miles, Inc. |
|  | Methomyl, metomil and mesomile | Carbamate | I | 17 | Lannate | DuPont Agricultural Products |
|  | Ethoprop | OP | I | 26 | Mocap | Bayer CropScience |
|  | Strychnine | Not available | R | 30 | (Sometimes Nux Vomica) | Many |
| \* Use Key: Insecticide = I Nematicide=N Rodenticide=R | | | | | | |
| **Check the following as applicable:**   Prohibited pesticides are not used on the operation   The prohibited pesticides checked above are used on the operation, for the following target pests/diseases/weeds: | | | | | | |

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| **Management Practices and Scored Evaluation Criteria** |
| This section is designed to collect information on how your operation’s management practices align with Food Alliance scored evaluation criteria for shellfish production. Each set of questions begins with a description of an evaluation area, and is followed by:   1. **A set of essay questions:** These questions are designed to help you think about your operation in a way that will help you communicate effectively with the site inspector. 2. **Evaluation criteria:** A list of the evaluation criteria an inspector will use to evaluate your management practices, along with a checkbox list of indicators which are examples of practices that meet each of the evaluation criteria objectives. As you read through the evaluation criteria and related management practices, please check all appropriate boxes and/or language that best fit your operation. You do NOT need to be able to check all boxes. Please check only those practices/management techniques currently used on your operation. If an evaluation criterion is non-applicable to your operation, please write “N/A” (non-applicable) next to the practice and use the “other” checkbox to explain why it is non-applicable. |

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| **Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation** |
| Food Alliance certified shellfish producers conserve fish and wildlife habitat by using methods such as establishing or maintaining native vegetation in upland and aquatic areas, limiting vehicle traffic and farm activities in documented reproductive areas, limiting farm activities during migration and spawning times, implementing practices that reduce or limit sediment transport, and by monitoring, preventing and controlling invasive and nuisance species. |
| **What is your overall strategy for maintaining and/or increasing fish wildlife habitat areas on your operation?** |
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| **Wildlife Habitat Conservation Evaluation Criteria** |
| (Note: Wildlife habitat includes both terrestrial and aquatic areas. ALL production areas should be considered.) |
| **Continuing Education for Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Natural areas exist on the operation. Steps are taken to prevent agricultural activities from interfering with natural areas.  Managers use general interest publications (newspapers, industry publications, etc) to keep up to date on fish and wildlife habitat conservation issues/management strategies  Managers use technical, subject matter-specific information sources or participate in seminars for habitat management, ID of habitat types or native vegetation, fish or wildlife management, etc.  Farm has participated (or has participated in the last 5 years) in on-farm testing of wildlife habitat conservation strategies or concepts to evaluate their performance.  Farm has implemented proven wildlife habitat conservation strategies.  Other (please specify): |
| **Habitat Conservation Improvements** |
| **Check all that apply**  Farm has made at least one improvement on upland areas or aquatic lands. (Check below, as appropriate.)  Standing deadwood left for bird habitat.  Established native vegetation along unused upland areas.  Addressed terrestrial and aquatic habitat in a comprehensive farm plan.  Uses native plants to landscape around buildings.  Engages in practices that reduce or limit the impact of farm operations on native eelgrass.  Engages in practices that reduce or limit sediment transport. (E.g., For manila clams, low profile mechanical harvest limits impacts to first 8” of sediment.)  Limits disturbances to fish and wildlife breeding areas especially during reproductive periods.  Other (please specify):  Farm has participated in set-aside or wildlife habitat conservation programs such as “CRP”, “WHIP”, or “EQIP” and/or has set aside and not converted priority habitat and management protects habitat value of this area. *Check below, as appropriate.*  Participates in set-aside programs similar to Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or other and manages this area for habitat potential (e.g. Native oyster restoration).  Participates in programs such as the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) or Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to conserve wildlife habitat.  Farm has set aside and not converted priority habitat and manages to protect the habitat value of this area.  Set-aside or not-converted priority habitat accounts for at least 5% of total uplands and or aquatic lands.  Established a new natural area in the last 10 years.  Increased habitat values of upland, tidelands and/or their interface for mobile species (e.g. salmon, surf smelt)  Established habitat corridors between SAV areas (e.g. native eelgrass).  Other (please specify): |
| **Invasive Species Management** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Note: Naturalized and accepted species, by federal and state/provincial governments, (e.g. pacific oyster, manila clam, Japanese scallop) are not considered invasive for the purposes of this evaluation criteria.  Manager has the ability to identify most common invasive species.  Purchased seed only comes from nurseries or hatcheries that have all required state/provincial and federal certification records.  State or federal regulations for movement controls of shellfish for invasive species prevention and control are followed.  Manager abides by, and can describe the following state/provincial and federal laws and management practices:  State/provincial and/or federal transfer permits requirements.  New and/or existing species source or new species importation requirements.  Control measures for limiting the introduction or spread of invasive species are in place. *Check below, as appropriate:*  All materials used (bags, shell, etc) in the aquatic environment are sterilized/sanitized (e.g. dried and/or cleaned on an upland site) prior to transfer to a new invasive species control area.  Manager can describe invasive species management system, detailing some knowledge of existing problems.  Manager can communicate an understanding of how both production area and upland/buffer area management contributes to problems.  Manager can communicate knowledge of invasive species life history and vulnerabilities to avoid introduction.  An inventory of invasive species problems, which extends beyond the production system and into upland and/or buffer areas, is maintained  Manager discusses problems with neighbors to increase effectiveness of the control effort.  Other (please specify):  Steps are taken to eradicate invasive species while not harming the habitat and populations of natural species (e.g. employing tactics such and fresh or saline water dipping, spraying or rinsing and/or hand harvest).  When applicable, manager works with state/provincial/federal agencies (e.g. Dept. of Natural Resources, Dept. of Agriculture, Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, Dept. of Fisheries and Oceans) to develop and implement control plans. |
| **Nuisance Species Management** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Note: Nuisance species include native aquatic species, such as sea stars, starfish, and moon snails, wildlife such as scoter ducks and seals, and fouling organisms such as barnacles.  Producer/manager can show compliance with federal and state/provincial harvest/take rules  Producer/manager is able to communicate knowledge of and identify nuisance species in the area  Control of nuisance species involves the following prevention strategies. *Check below, as appropriate.*  All materials used in the aquatic environment (bags, shell, etc) are sterilized/sanitized (e.g., dried and/or cleaned on an upland site) prior to transfer to a new nuisance species control area.  An inventory of nuisance species problems, which extends beyond the production system and into upland and/or buffer areas, is maintained  Steps are taken to deal with nuisance species by employing devices to lessen their effect (predator protection devices, fencing, etc.) or tactics such as fresh or saline water dipping, spraying or rinsing.  Producer/manager works with state/provincial/federal agencies (e.g., Dept. of Natural Resources, Dept. of Agriculture, Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, Dept. of Fisheries and Oceans) to develop and implement avoidance or control plans.  Producer/manager discusses problems with neighbors to increase effectiveness of the control or avoidance effort.  Other (please specify): |
| **Threatened and Endangered Species Protection (upland and aquatic)** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Producer/manager is able to discuss major threatened and endangered species issues, identify those species found in the locality, and has general knowledge of habitat needs and concerns  Producer/manager can identify natural areas/habitat on the farm suitable for locally listed threatened and endangered species AND protects the habitat.  Management has plan in place to notify local NMFS and USFW offices if/when any injury or death (“take”) of endangered or threatened species (e.g., marbled murrelets, bull trout, southern distinct population segment green sturgeon) occurs.  Producer/manager has written copies of applicable permits and other documents relating to listed species from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and other regulatory agencies and tribal entities.  Threatened and endangered species conservation is addressed in general management plan and specific actions are taken to maintain their presence on the land.  Producer/manager works with state/provincial/federal agencies (e.g., Dept. of Natural Resources, Dept. of Agriculture, Dept. Fisheries and Oceans) to protect threatened and endangered species habitat.  Other (please specify): |
| **Fish and Wildlife Food, Cover, Habitat Structure, and Water** |
| **Check all that apply**  Actions are taken to minimize adverse effects on wildlife food, habitat structure, cover, and water resources.  *Check below, as appropriate:*  Producer/managers are knowledgeable of and follow all laws, permit requirements needed for their growing region.  Vehicle traffic and farm activities in documented reproductive areas are limited during migration and spawning times (e.g., Sand Lance and Surf Smelt).  Beach driving is kept to a minimum, is only done on established singular routes and a plan is in place for when breakdowns occur.  Where beaching is repetitious, such as off-loading, mooring and haul-out sites are established and used,  Marine mammal interactions are limited only to necessary farm operations.  Other (please specify):  Cultivated and non-cultivated areas are actively managed for the benefit of wildlife. *Check below, as appropriate*:  Producer/manager can identify wildlife and plant species.  Mesh opening on blanket netting is kept at maximum size to increase sediment access while still protecting the cultured product and reducing entanglement of wildlife.  Netting is evaluated and maintained/repaired on a regular schedule.  Native upland vegetation is preserved and promoted.  Floating or raised blanket nets are not utilized so increased sediment access is provided to mobile species.  Field borders/buffer strips are maintained for diverse habitat (SAV, shellfish, mudflat).  Only non-lethal predator control methods are promoted and utilized.  SAV is not disturbed during migration or reproductive times (e.g., herring) in documented spawning areas.  Invasive non-native weeds are removed.  Eelgrass buffer strips or patches/areas are left or promoted to connect wildlife corridors and to potentially increase spawning areas.  Wildlife crops for food are planted (unprotected clams/oysters).  Incidental take of non-target species is reduced by selective harvesting.  A written marine mammal interaction plan is in place.  Other (please specify): |
| Linking Individual Wildlife Habitat Conservation Activities Together |
| **Check all that apply:**  Producer/manager participates in watershed councils, conservation, soil and water districts, or other landscape activities promoted by state/provincial/federal agencies, shellfish organizations, non-profits, or similar groups.  Producer/manager has made habitat improvements in concert with nearby landowners, or on their own, to create large and/or connected patches of upland or tideland habitat.  Producer/manager has made habitat improvements as a part of a regional plan that includes other landowners:  Watershed council plan  Eco-regional plan (like those created by groups like The Nature Conservancy, etc.)  Coordinated resource management plans  Soil, conservation and water district plans  State/provincial wide habitat/biodiversity plans  Other (please specify): |
| **Healthy and Humane Care for Shellstock** |
| Food Alliance certified shellfish producers use appropriate stocking densities to ensure adequate food utilization and water quality requirements for shellfish are met, and continually monitor effects of shellfish production on neighboring wild or managed shellfish beds. To prevent and control infectious disease, state and federal regulations for movement controls are complied with, and purchased seed is only purchased from nurseries or hatcheries that have all required state/provincial and federal certification records. Policies are in place to address procedures and materials for cleaning and disinfecting facilities and equipment, to further limit risks from contamination and disease. Shellfish are transported in a manner that prevents overloading and limits stress on shellfish (e.g. shell gape, mortality), and loads are secured such that shellfish and fouling organisms do not fall onto roadways. |
| **1. Please describe how you determine your planting densities.** |
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| **2. Please list what you believe are the most critical factors for ensuring infectious disease prevention/control and adequate food safety on your shellfish operation.** |
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| **Healthy and Humane Care Evaluation Criteria** |
| **Planting and Production Plan** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Operation has a basic written production plan OR manager can give a verbal description of the production plan. *Check below, as appropriate*  Plan describes planting densities and desired harvest densities.  Plan contains a discussion of the production goals and the short-term objectives needed to reach these goals.  The plan includes density evaluations during harvest, and how that information relates to future seeding activities.  Production plan is written  Other (please specify):  Manager is aware of food utilization and water quality requirements of shellfish. *Check below, as appropriate*  Water quality conditions and resources are considered, and management is directed towards the issue.  Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) conditions and resources are considered and management is directed towards the issue.  Biotoxin issues are considered and management is directed towards the issue.  Other (please specify): |
| **Carrying Capacity Management** |
| **Check all that apply:**  **Note:** This applies only for raft or long-line culture systems where shellfish extend horizontally more than three feet into the water column.  On farm carrying capacity is considered a factor in farm management.  Growth, seeding and density records are kept and evaluated to increase yield while addressing possible on-farm and adjacent farm carrying capacity issues raised by neighboring farm producer/managers.  Operation has documentation that their farm does not adversely affect neighboring wild or managed shellfish beds. (This documentation needs to be location specific and must include one of the following: neighboring upstream and downstream phytoplankton levels, neighboring production/growth levels, and/or historical and current shellfish growth information for their water body.)  Other (please specify): |
| **Disease Prevention and Management** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Federal and state/provincial transfer rules are complied with.  Purchased seed only comes from nurseries or hatcheries that have all required state/provincial and federal certification records.  The following state/provincial and federal laws and management practices are complied with. *Check below, as appropriate*  State/provincial and/or federal transfer permit requirements.  New existing species source or new species importation requirements.  Brood stocks or seed stocks, as applicable, are examined for state/provincial or federal reportable diseases on a regular basis in compliance with applicable regulations.  **Please indicate if any of the following additional disease control strategies are used:**  All materials used in the aquatic environment (bags, shell, etc) are properly dried and cleaned on an upland site prior to transfer to a different disease control area or disposal site.  A written policy or protocol designed to prevent establishment of applicable state/provincial and federal reportable shellfish diseases is in place.  Producer/manager and/or key staff participate in training, seminars or certification courses that deal with disease prevention and management.  Producer/manager communicates knowledge base of infectious shellfish diseases in the area and has the ability to identify disease signs that are recognizable by visual examination, with knowledge of disease risk factors.  Stock certification and mortality records are maintained indefinitely.  Veterinary or other applicable shellfish health management professional services are utilized to support shellfish infectious disease control program.  Producer/manager discusses disease problems with neighbors to increase effectiveness of the control effort.  Other (please specify): |
| Transportation (nursery and growout) |
| **Check all that apply:**  **Note:** This covers on-farm and farm to market transport.  Transportation equipment is kept in good repair to prevent injury and comply with regulations.  Loads are secured to prevent shellfish or fouling organisms from falling onto the roadway.  Overloading that will injure animals (e.g. shell gape, mortality) is prevented.  Time to temperature requirements are followed and documented.  Temperature and weather conditions are factored into transportation to reduce thermal stress.  Transportation temperatures are monitored (e.g., temperature logger/exposure tag in shipment) and noted/recorded.  Other (please specify): |
| **Hazard Reduction and Sanitation (growout)** |
| **Check all that apply:**  **Note:** This criterion covers Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC) and subsequent National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP) issues such as rainfall and biotoxin closures along with other health and sanitation issues.  All legal requirements are met for food safety and bio-security, including hygiene, sanitation, fuel and pesticide storage, and harvest restrictions due to health-based regulatory closures.  Policy/plan for addressing standard procedures, materials for cleaning and disinfecting facilities and equipment, personal protective gear, and limiting risks from contamination and disease spread is in place. *Check below, as appropriate:*  HAACP and farm safety plans are in place and available for review  Signage listing procedures and precautions is present where appropriate, e.g., fuel, pesticide storages, and toilet facilities.  Cleaning and disinfecting products are used properly, i.e. anti-microbial disinfectants are not used where cleaning products are appropriate, and training is provided.  Handlers use clean and appropriate personal protective gear (such as ear protection, gloves, boots), where appropriate.  Other (please specify):  Access to some facilities (where appropriate), equipment, medicine, fuel and pesticide stores is limited to appropriate persons. *Check below, as appropriate:*  Pesticide and fuel storage is locked.  Entrances to farm and facilities are appropriately marked and patrolled to discourage/prevent unauthorized entry and/or movement of disease or contaminants into sensitive areas. (This information is available in HAACP plan.)  Pesticide and/or fuel use is tracked in a manner to ensure unauthorized use or spillage can be detected.  Biosecurity measures are in place to prevent diseases from being transferred between farm holding facilities or to other farms, and available for review.  Other (please specify): |

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| **Shared Resource Management** |
| Shellfish production often occurs in close proximity to communities that may be affected by farming activities. Food Alliance certified shellfish producers proactively take steps to minimize potential conflicts with neighboring landowners by notifying adjacent landowners and tribal agencies before any significant farming activities take place, and by using techniques that keep visual impacts, disturbance, and noise on production sites to a minimum. Such techniques include monitoring farm sites and cleaning up any excessive debris, keeping both production and upland areas neat and organized, using color neutral farm materials that blend in with the surrounding environment, reducing vessel speeds while near residences to reduce noise levels, and keeping illumination to a minimum when navigating at night. Additionally, owners/managers take steps to ensure farm site boundaries (on both leased and owned sites) are accurately defined and production occurs only within those boundaries. |
| **1. Please explain your general philosophy for maintaining good relationships with neighboring landowners, Tribal agencies, and/or users of adjacent public access areas:** |
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| **2. If you have had conflict with neighboring or adjacent land owners/users in the past, please describe the steps you took to attempt to resolve that conflict (any information you provide will remain strictly confidential):** |
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| **Shared Resource Management Evaluation Criteria** |
| **User Relations** |
| **Check all that apply:**  All treaty settlements are followed and there is cooperation with local tribal agencies.  Adjacent landowners and local Tribal agencies are notified of significant farming activities  Good relations with neighbors are improved/maintained by following the management practices or strategies below (*check below, as appropriate):*  Farm materials are of a color neutral or matching the environment, unless these colors pose a risk to navigational safety.  Vessel speeds are reduced while near residences to reduce noise levels.  Headlamps are employed at a level to reduce unneeded illumination while maintaining safety.  Farm sites are monitored for excessive debris/debris is removed on a minimum quarterly basis.  Large farm materials are marked to denote owner.  Equipment noise reduction plans/procedures are put into place (sound suppression devices)  Farm materials are de-fouled at remote locations to reduce the risk of odors.  Verbal communication and recreational radios are limited near residences.  Farms are kept clean and orderly at upland, inter-tidal and water-based areas  Upland parking of farm/employee vehicles is restricted to owned or owner approved sites.  Adjacent properties are monitored for farm debris, and, where entry permission is granted, debris is removed in a timely manner.  Farm tours are created for neighbors and the nearby community.  Upland neighbors are allowed direct beach/water access.  Neighbors are allowed to harvest managed/unmanaged stocks for consumption.  Local agencies are notified that farm employees/vessels are available for assistance in times of marine emergencies.  Crew-user relations training is provided via in-house or outside seminars, classes or workshops.  Other (please specify): |
| **Farm-site Boundaries** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Copies of lease or ownership records of farm properties are held on site.  Farm boundaries are set using the most current and detailed descriptions/maps.  Modern survey methods, such as GPS, are employed to assess farm boundary locations.  Other (please specify): |

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| **Marine Operations and Navigation** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Federal (Coast Guard) and state/provincial navigational standards/rules are complied with.  The following measures are employed to ensure safe navigation *(check below, as appropriate)*  Plans are in place to provide rapid assistance if vessels/watercraft break down.  Anchors are properly sized and set to decrease movement of floating structures during normal and adverse weather conditions.  Raised bottom culture activities are clearly marked to prevent crop/vessel/personal injuries.  Floating structures and shallow submerged items are clearly marked and maintained in an orderly and grouped fashion to reduce accidents during normal and adverse visibility conditions.  Storm damaged structures are secured and remedied as quickly and safe as possible.  Ground culture protection devices are properly secured to prevent loss and potential entanglement.  Farm crews observe speed limits and reduce speeds near shores, other vessels, and users to avoid dangerous wave/wake conditions.  Anchor lines are clearly marked or submerged.  Speed limits are posted around floating facilities.  Local/National safety agencies (that provide liability coverage) are notified that farm employees/vessels are available for assistance in times of marine emergencies.  Other (please specify): |
| **Farm Equipment Maintenance and Material Reduction** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Farm equipment is maintained on a regular basis and equipment and materials are managed by the following methods.  Materials are selected for their ease of reuse and durability.  Unused and derelict culture materials are promptly removed and disposed of.  Equipment/Materials are secured to withstand severe weather events.  Equipment is maintained to prevent spills and leaks and to improve efficiency.  Materials/structures do not contain substances identified by the EPA as containing materials that can readily enter and harm the marine environment. (Pre-existing structures, such as creosote pilings/dikes, are exempt if put into place before 2008.)  Treated lumber is not used in the construction of farm grow out or harvest structures.  Plans are in place to provide rapid assistance for when vehicles/vessels/watercraft breakdown.  **Please indicate if any of the following additional measures are in place:**  Equipment is purchased based on its high efficiency, low emissions and ease of maintenance.  Plans are in place to address non-farm related spills to reduce the risk of adverse farm and environmental interactions.  Biodegradable or food grade oils are used whenever possible/feasible.  Composting of suitable wastes is employed whenever possible/feasible.  Rechargeable battery use is encouraged in electronic devices and headlamps.  Recycling programs are in place to reduce landfill waste.  If antifouling paints are used, they do not contain marine toxins such as copper or organotin compounds  Other (please specify): |

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| **Soil & Water Conservation** | | |
| Food Alliance certified shellfish producers protect water and soil resources by maintaining buffers between newly positioned farm operations and sensitive habitats (e.g. SAV, surf smelt, and sand lance spawning grounds), and/or by reducing or avoiding high impact practices during critical times (e.g. intensive dredging during SAV growth seasons). Upland vegetation is promoted to limit soil erosion in upland areas and to provide shadowing of near-shore areas. Food Alliance certified shellfish producers are knowledgeable of appropriate carrying capacities, nutrient uptake and sequestration cycles in soils and shellfish, and keep abreast of best management practices to protect water quality and environmental health. | | |
| **1. Does your operation have control over any upland areas near your production sites?** | YES | NO |
| **2. Please briefly describe any measures that are employed to prevent erosion in upland areas (if you have control over these areas) and/or to protect water quality and sensitive habitat areas.** | | |
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| **Soil and Water Conservation Evaluation Criteria** |
| **Note:** For the purposes of the evaluation criteria in this section, the term “soil” is broadly defined as all aquatic sediments and tidelands as well as upland soils. |
| Continuing Education for Soil and Water Resource Conservation |
| **Check all that apply:**  General interest shellfish publications are frequently reviewed (newspapers and general newsletters, etc.) to keep abreast of resource conservation issues,  A written farm plan is in place that addresses the following issues and/or manager can verbally communicate technical knowledge of the following resource conservation issues. Check below, as applicable:  Bulkhead and pile type and methods to mitigate  Carrying capacity and farm production  Precision seeding/stock densities  Water quality and environmental health  Submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) habitat and buffer zones  Nutrient uptake and sequestration in soils and shellfish  Upland and riparian vegetation conservation  Benthic and pelagic ecology  TSS/turbidity/siltation reduction measures  Farm materials reduction and recycling  Other (please specify):  Producer/manager participates (or has participated in the last 5 years) in either on-farm testing of resource conservation strategies to evaluate their usefulness, and/or, participates in local or regional water quality or resource enhancement/management council or organization. |
| **Buffer Strips/Sensitive Habitats** |
| **Check all that apply:**  **Note:** SAV avoidance/buffers may not be practical for established farms in certain growing regions (e.g., Willapa Bay); practices may be developed to avoid major impacts (e.g., reducing high impact practices such as intensive dredging on SAV during SAV growth seasons).  Buffer strips of 10ft (3m) or more are put in place between newly positioned farm operations and sensitive habitats (e.g., SAV, surf smelt and sand lance spawning grounds).  Practices are used to avoid major impacts to SAV and/or sensitive habitat areas.  As documented by a pre-installation underwater survey, new floating aquaculture systems are not located above existing SAV.  Sensitive habitats are photographed, mapped or tracked at least every 2 years to determine localized increases or decreases adjacent to or within the farm site.  Sensitive habitats are plotted yearly via detailed maps and accompanied with site photography and qualitative sampling.  Other (please specify): |

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| **Upland/Near-Shore Resource Management** |
| **Check all that apply:**  All local, state/provincial and national laws and regulations are followed regarding near-shore and upland uses.  If operation has control over the uplands areas, steps are taken to reduce the reliance of hardened bulkhead structures at farm sites and maintain upland vegetation that interacts with the near-shore environment.  Upland and near-shore modifications are limited to high traffic access points.  Native upland vegetation is promoted to increase stability of the uplands and shading of the near-shore.  Other (please specify): |
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| **Reducing Pesticide Usage** |
| Food Alliance certified shellfish producers make informed decisions regarding weed and pest management and pesticide/herbicide use. They employ cultural and biological prevention strategies to reduce or eliminate the need for chemical applications, and thus minimize negative impacts on the surrounding ecosystem. When possible, upland weed species are controlled through hand or mechanical removal. Native vegetation on upland areas is maintained and/or upland areas are re-vegetated with desirable species to maximize weed competition, and limit weed infestations. If chemical control is needed, materials are selected that have the least environmental and health hazards. |
| **Note:** This section applies to the use of herbicides for both land-based and aquatic applications, and other pesticides for land-based operations only. If no herbicides/pesticides are used by the operation, please indicate below.  **This operation uses no pesticides or herbicides on upland or aquatic areas. (SKIP TO NEXT SECTION)** |
| **1. Please briefly describe pest or weed management strategies employed on your operation, including prevention and control measures used, and target pest or weed species.** |
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| **Reducing Pesticide Usage Evaluation Criteria** |
| **Continuing Education for Reducing Chemical Usage** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Manager or contractor (private, state, or county applicator) is a licensed private applicator, and meets all continuing education requirements for licensed private applicators.  Producer/manager consults crop advisors, extension agents, pest control consultants/coordinators and/or other agricultural specialists as needed.  Producer/manager attends education seminars on the following subject matters *(check below, as appropriate)*  Biological pest control  Low risk pesticides  Pesticide application safety  Techniques to reduce amount of pesticides applied  Pest and disease management  Other (please specify): |
| **IPM Planning (upland areas)** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Please indicate if the following preventative measures are used to reduce pest problems:  Pest and disease resistant plant varieties are used.  Field scouting is practiced.  Site selection is a criterion for upland vegetation establishment.  Insect phenology/degree day modeling informs pest management.  Competitive plant species are intentionally seeded.  Weed species are removed by hand or mechanically.  Natural or mechanical re-vegetation with desirable species is used to maximize site usefulness and weed competition, thus limiting potential re-invasion.  Other (please specify): |
| **Site Monitoring / Field Scouting and Weather Monitoring (upland)** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Upland areas are monitored for nuisance species (weeds, rodents etc).  Records are maintained of pesticide use around and inside the upland staging areas and facilities.  Problem areas are scouted at least twice per year.  Important weather parameters are monitored, and pesticides are not applied when weather conditions are not appropriate (e.g., wind or precipitation episodes are expected.).  Weather data is used to schedule pesticide applications for weather-dependent pests (phenology or degree-day models).  Other (please specify): |

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| **Lowest Effective Application Rates /Pesticide Selection and Justification (upland)** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Pesticide application rates are selected according to manufacturer’s label.  Reduced dosage strategies are employed when the target pest does not require complete coverage.  Producer/manager/contactor can show that only pesticides registered in the state/province as approved for target pests and crop are used.  Pesticide mixtures prohibited by the label are not used.  The timing of applications and selection of pesticide materials correspond with scouting records or monitoring. No materials labeled “Danger” are used to control pests.  Other (please specify): |
| **Pesticide Record Keeping** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Note: Pesticide records are a key element of the inspection process and are the only way inspectors can verify activities of the past. Certain products will not be able to be calibrated (e.g., upland applications of Roundup).  Producer/manager/contractor can show that all legal requirements for pesticide record keeping are met.  Copies of pesticide application records taken by a commercial company, government agency or the owner/manager are maintained on site and include the following information (check below, as appropriate):  Crop growth stage  Pest growth stage including densities.  Purpose of the pesticide treatment, i.e., target pest  Threshold used to guide pesticide treatment  Current weather data, e.g., weather conditions on day of application  Effectiveness of pesticide treatment  Current weather data during treatment  Other (please specify): |
| **Calibration of Application Equipment and Pesticide Drift** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Application equipment that can be calibrated (insecticide, fungicide, herbicide application equipment) is calibrated at least once per year.  Applications are made only with equipment designed for that use.  Nozzles are checked and replaced when necessary.  Products are mixed according to label directions.  Surfactants are used to minimize drift when recommended by the label.  Applications are made only under weather conditions that minimize off-site movement (e.g., low wind speed, not raining).  Other (please specify): |

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| **Hazardous Material Storage (upland)** |
| **Check all that apply:**  **Note:** Storage facilities may be operated by owner/manager or other entity (e.g., other land owner, private applicator) and be located on the grower’s facility/property or off site.  Storage facilities for hazardous materials (pesticides, fertilizers, fuel, lubricants) meet legal requirements (where applicable).  Hazardous materials are stored in original, clearly labeled containers.  Long-term storage is at least 150 ft. away from wells and 200 ft. away from surface water or sources of flame.  Storage size and organization is adequate to separate flammables from other materials.  Pesticides are organized by insecticides, herbicides, etc  Containers are organized to prevent spillage when storing/removing materials.  Hazardous materials are stored away from shellfish seed and other materials/inputs that may come in contact with the marine environment.  Storage area is clearly marked on the outside with warning signs.  Flammables are kept out of direct sunlight.  Dry materials are stored above liquids.  Storage area is locked.  Storage area has a sealed floor.  Storage area is well ventilated (no strong chemical smell).  Inventory is managed on a first-in, first-out basis.  Other (please specify): |

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| **Safe & Fair Working Conditions Management Practices** | | | |
| **Background:** Food Alliance certified shellfish producers develop farm employment policies to establish open channels for communicating with employees about such issues as workplace safety and job satisfaction. They provide incentives and opportunities for the development of employee skills and incorporate quality of life issues into daily decision making for themselves, their families and employees. | | | |
| **1. What is your philosophy for developing human resources and/or enhancing quality of life issues on your farm?** | | | |
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| **2. How many workers does your operation employ?** | | | |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: | This operation does NOT have any employees.  **(SKIP TO NEXT SECTION).** | | |
| Full-time employees: | Seasonal or part-time employees: | | |
| **3. How long, on average, have these employees worked for you?** | |  | |
| **4. Are any employee family members?** | | YES | NO |
| If so, how many? | | | |
| **5. Do you use labor contractors?** | | YES | NO |

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| **6. In the past five years have you been cited for violations by OSHA, Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI), or any other authorities?** | YES | NO |
| If yes, what was the citation for, how did you address the citation, and what is your current status? | | |
| **7. Please list any special services or benefits you provide for your employees.** | | |
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| **8. Do you provide housing for your employees?** | **YES** | **NO** |
| If “yes," please describe: | | |

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| **9. Please indicate your human resources policies and practices in the following table:** | | | |
| **Human Resources Policies** | **Written policy** | **Verbally communicated** | |
| Do you have a grievance policy, encouraging employees to raise concerns without fear of termination? | YES | YES | NO |
| Do you have a policy encouraging employees to suggest ways to improve the workplace? | YES | YES | NO |
| Do you have a policy expressing a willingness to receive suggestions from third-party representatives? | YES | YES | NO |
| Do you have a policy that gives employees flexibility in the case of family emergencies? | YES | YES | NO |
| Do you have a policy that keeps non-employees and under working age children out of the fields and/or workplace? | YES | YES | NO |
| Do you have a discipline process and policy? | YES | YES | NO |
| Are workers given job offer terms/contracts? | YES | YES | NO |
| Do you have a safety policy and/or program? | YES | YES | NO |
| Are farm policies and job expectations communicated to employees prior to start date? | YES | YES | NO |

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| **Safe & Fair Working Conditions Evaluation Criteria** |
| **Minors, children and family members in the workplace** |
| **Check all that apply:**  If legal minors are employed, they only work during non-school hours.  Special training is provided for minors and/or nursery family’s children (see 4-H guidelines for child safety on operations).  Children of nursery family, when engaged in nursery activities are directly supervised or assisted by adults.  Written policy is in place to prevent children or visitors from entering working areas without supervision.  If non-family member minors are employed, employer communicates with parents of minors regarding the employment of their children.  Employer provides childcare for employees’ children.  Other (please specify): |
| **Grievance Procedures and Policies/Recognizing and Supporting Employee Input** |
| **Check all that apply:**  A management policy exists that allows/encourages employees to raise concerns or grievances without fear of termination.  Written policy is in place which encourages employee input on workplace conditions and suggestions for improvement  Written grievance policy is in place which describes the procedure for reporting a grievance and steps that will be taken by the owner/manager to address the employee concern.  Employees are directed to a designated individual with whom to raise concerns/grievances.  If needed, employer can speak with employee in native language, or someone on staff is available to translate.  Employer or manager encourages employees to discuss work place issues.  Operator supports group activities with space for meeting and/or time set aside during the workday for meetings.  Other (please specify): |
| **Farm Worker Support Services** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Owner/manager is willing to meet with groups of employees and/or third parties to improve workplace conditions  Employer is willing to meet with community groups to discuss health and welfare issues.  Employer works with outside groups to ID training needs and/or safety concerns.  Other (please specify): |

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| **Discipline Process** |
| **Check all that apply:**  A written discipline policy is in place and is distributed to new hires  Owner/managers follow discipline policy and all meetings regarding disciplinary issues/actions are documented  Firing of an employee comes at the end of a stepped, progressive discipline process.  Other (please specify): |
| **Nondiscrimination policy** |
| **Check all that apply:**  A written policy describing non-discrimination practices is in place and is written/posted in a manner consistent with the law. The following items are discussed (check below, as applicable):  Age  Race  Third party affiliation  Religion  Gender  Sexual orientation  National origin  Disability  Other (please specify): |
| **Hiring practices and communicating expectations and policies** |
| **Check all that apply:**  The nursery communicates job expectations and policies at the time of hire. Check the following, as appropriate:  Expectations and policies are in English and applicable language for non-English speakers.  New employees are given a sign off sheet acknowledging receipt of the policies.  Employer gives some limited job training and orientation specific to tasks.  Employer has an orientation checklist that is kept on file to keep a record of orientation/training activities.  Employer shows educational materials such as videos, manuals, etc, for safety and/or tasks specific to the jobs.  Employer has taken a cultural sensitivity class to better relate with employees.  Other (please specify): |
| **Work Force Development and New Skills Training** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Employer allows limited unpaid leave for employees to pursue training.  Employer encourages workplace training by providing direct pay or paid time off or tuition for job related educational activities.  Employer offers direct pay or paid leave and tuition to employees for training relevant to required tasks.  Other (please specify): |

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| **Compensation practices** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Employer adjusts piece rates to reward seniority or performance or changing crop conditions.  Employer gives bonuses to reward productivity of the group.  Employer shares profits.  Employer distributes work opportunities fairly, not giving favorite workers best opportunities.  Employer conducts regular performance evaluations, rewarding good performance with pay raises.  When employer gives pay advances to employees, they have system to communicate the expectations to prevent confusion on the part of the employee.  Employer gives bonus wages to reward excellent work.  Other (please specify): |
| **Employee benefits** |
| **Check all that apply:**  The following employee benefits are provided by the operation: (check below, as appropriate).  Health insurance  Disability insurance  Life insurance  Subsidizes cost of or provides transportation to employees  Arranges for community groups to provide assistance to workers  Sick pay  Vacation pay  Reduced cost housing for full time employees  Housing allowance, special compensation to cover housing costs  Migrant worker/temporary worker housing at reduced rates  Employer gives bonus wages to reward excellent work  Other (please specify): |
| **Worker housing and family support services** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Employer provides housing and housing meets legal standards.  Employer keeps a list of community resources to give to employees.  Employer keeps a list of housing opportunities to give to employees.  Employer offers childcare services or stipend.  Employer participates at a high level (leadership, donations, etc.) in community groups dedicated to increasing housing opportunities or family support services.  Employer donates money and other resources to local housing groups or family support services.  Other (please specify): |

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| **Pesticide/herbicide applicator safety and Hazardous materials emergency management** |
| **Check all that apply:**  All legal requirements are met for protection of handler/applicators and others who handle hazardous materials  When applicable, workers handling solvents, fertilizers, etc., with potential to cause injury, are provided appropriate safety equipment.  All state or local legal requirements (if applicable) are met for emergency management of spills, fires or other emergencies related to hazardous materials.  Emergency washing facilities (this can include the operator’s home) such as showers, eyewash and spare clean clothing are provided near storage, mixing/loading and application sites.  An emergency management plan is in place which contains: (check below, as appropriate)  Identification and phone numbers for persons who should be contacted.  Procedures and equipment to be used.  Copies of complete labels and SDS sheets of hazardous materials used.  Location of fixed storage sites.  Other (please specify): |
| **Sanitation** |
| **Check all that apply:**  Producer/manager can show that employees follow all state/provincial and federal upland and marine sanitation laws and regulations, and all the following apply:  **Note**: For operations relying on boat access the following is only needed in shop areas, at company-controlled boat access points and at floating facilities where workers are expected to stay for extended periods (+3hrs). Marine portable toilets and hand sanitizers are acceptable on floating structures. *Check all that apply:*  Employer provides clean drinking water and clean latrines with handwashing stations to workers in fields and/or working areas.  Handwashing stations or facilities have soap and water.  If holding tanks are used, they are pumped out according to by law.  Upon inspection all facilities are clean.  Employer provides a shower facility with warm water for employees to wash and change after the workday. (This can include the operator’s home)  Hand washing stations or facilities have *hot* water and soap.  Employer maintains a checklist of station/facility cleaning (At least weekly).  Other (please specify): |

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| General Safety |
| **Check all that apply:**  Producer/manager can describe how employees follow all state/provincial and federal upland and marine (including diving) safety laws and regulations and all the following apply:  Employers provide safety training.  Overtime and number of days worked continuously are limited by safety considerations.  Employees wear PFD’s while on floating systems or vessels.  Vessels are properly lit during nighttime operations.  Employees are equipped with communications devices (e.g. cell phones, VHF radios) while on vessels/floating systems that can be used at and in transit to work sites.  At sites only accessed via vessel, a vessel is left with employees while they are at the site.  Crews are trained to manage overboard and onboard emergencies.  PFD’s are checked by owner’s manual specifications, first aid kits are available  Employer contracts with professional firms to provide safety/first aid training. Training can be documented.  Employer has developed training checklists specific to jobs to ensure each employee gets training.  Employer sets goals for safety and tracks success.  Employer gives bonuses when safety goals are met.  Other (please specify): |

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| **Continual Improvement** | |
| **Background:** Food Alliance certified producers set goals and assess their progress toward these goals by monitoring for impacts of decisions on their farm, family, employees and the environment. Food Alliance producers seek out new and innovative management techniques to integrate into their farm management. They respect their neighbors and take steps where possible to prevent agricultural production from being a nuisance. When possible, they take leading roles in their communities by participating in community groups and industry associations, sharing information and expertise and serving as mentors to others. | |
| Considering the Food Alliance evaluation criteria listed throughout this application, please describe improvement goals: | |
| **Improvement goal:** | |
| **Improvement goal:** | |
| **Improvement goal:** | |
| The information provided in this application is accurate and true. I am the person responsible for the operational decisions of the farm making this application, and I have knowledge of the information contained in this application. I understand that any misrepresentation of the operation described herein may be grounds for denying this application and/or removing my farm from the Food Alliance certification program. | |
| **Name:** | **Date:** |
| **Signature:** | |

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| **Licensing Agreement for Food Alliance Certification** | | |
| It is a condition of Food Alliance certification that all licensees sign agreement to the following conditions at application and on renewal of certification. | | |
| On Behalf of (Company name):  I agree to the statements given below. |  | |
| Name: | | Date: |
| Signature: | | |
| As the designated representative of this operation, I hereby acknowledge and agree to the following: | | |
| **1. General** | | |
| 1.1 All parties responsible for compliance have read and understand the standards and policies of Food Alliance and confirm that requirements described therein will be observed for the term of certification, including labeling requirements.  1.2 Information provided in the accompanying application and during the resulting inspection is accurate and fully describes this operation’s management practices to the best knowledge of the people supplying it.  1.3 This operation is fully responsible for adhering to all relevant local, state, national, and international laws. While Food Alliance may address related issues as part of the certification process, it is not Food Alliance’s responsibility to ensure that this operation is compliant with law. This operation shall in no way hold Food Alliance responsible for any failure to comply with law.  1.4 On request, this operation will make available to Food Alliance any reports, recommendations, licenses, etc. from statutory authorities.  1.5 This operation will inform Food Alliance of any current, recent (within the last 12 months) or pending investigations or prosecutions which may have a bearing on its certification.  1.6 This operation will notify Food Alliance promptly of any and all changes that may affect its certification status, including changes of ownership or management, or changes to production and storage facilities, products, composition and labeling of products, or operating procedures. Notification is required within one week for contamination or other events that might affect the integrity of Food Alliance Certified product claims. | | |
| **2. Data Protection and Use of Information** | | |
| 2.1 The information this operation provides in the application and inspection process will be treated as confidential by Food Alliance and its contracted inspectors. Confidentiality will be maintained regardless of the results of the certification inspection or the operation’s certification status.  2.2 Food Alliance does maintain a list of certified entities that consent to have their contact information published or supplied to third parties, (e.g. other certified businesses, commercial food buyers, etc.). This information may also be published on Food Alliance’s website.  Please check this box if you DO NOT want to be included on this list. | | |

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| **3. Sub-Contractors** |
| 3.1 This operation will assure that all products sold as certified by Food Alliance comply with the requirements of the Food Alliance program.  3.2 A list and a description of the activities of all subcontractors involved in the production or preparation of Food Alliance certified products will be provided to Food Alliance, and this operation will ensure that subcontractors are inspected and certified by Food Alliance as appropriate. |
| **4. Access** |
| 4.1 This operation will provide access during normal working hours, for either arranged or unannounced visits, to inspectors appointed and/or contracted by Food Alliance for the purpose of carrying out inspections and to provide access to any areas or information deemed necessary for the purposes of the inspection. |
| **5. Sampling** |
| 5.1 This operation agrees to permit Food Alliance to take samples for testing of products or for checking production techniques or for detecting possible contamination by unauthorized ingredients and to provide the results of its own voluntary inspection and sampling programs on request. |
| **6. Use of License and Food Alliance Certification Seal** |
| 6.1 I will make claims regarding certification only in respect to enterprises and products that comply with the requirements of Food Alliance and for which certification has been granted.  6.2 I will endeavor not to make any statement or claim regarding certification which Food Alliance may consider misleading or unauthorized.  6.3 I will ensure that references to certification on packaging and marketing materials comply with the requirements of Food Alliance by submitting them to Food Alliance for approval before use. |
| **7. Cancellation or Suspension of Certification** |
| 7.1 This operation has the right to voluntarily withdraw from Food Alliance certification at any time without penalty, notwithstanding costs incurred by Food Alliance for services rendered up until the time of voluntary withdrawal. Voluntary withdrawals will be submitted in writing.  7.2 If this operation’s certification is terminated or suspended or if a crop or batch of produce/product loses its certified status, Food Alliance may publicize that fact.  7.3 Upon cancellation or suspension of Food Alliance certification, this operation will discontinue the use of all marketing and other materials that contain reference to Food Alliance and return certification documents as required by Food Alliance. Furthermore, this operation will inform buyers of certified products of its change in status in writing and in good time to ensure that references to Food Alliance certification are removed from products in inventory. |
| **8. Payment of Fees** |
| 8.1 This operation will pay all fees and costs related to certification as determined and published by Food Alliance. |
| **9. Use of Food Alliance Brand Collateral** |
| 9.1 Food Alliance is the owner of the name ‘Food Alliance,’ of the Food Alliance certification seal, and of the phrase ‘Food Alliance Certified.’ Use of the name ‘Food Alliance,’ of the Food Alliance certification seal, and of the phrase ‘Food Alliance Certified’ for commercial, promotional or educational purposes must be specifically authorized by Food Alliance.  9.2 The Food Alliance certification seal may be used only for identification and promotion of Food Alliance Certified products. The certification seal may be used on Food Alliance Certified products, on product packaging and in point-of-sale materials for Food Alliance Certified products. All uses must be submitted to Food Alliance for review and approval before production and distribution. Please allow at least 5 working days for a response. Use of the Food Alliance certification seal for generic materials or promotions where viewers may wrongly assume certification for non-certified products or facilities will not be approved.  9.3 Failure to seek approvals for use of Food Alliance brand collateral may be grounds for suspension or revocation of certification. |

1. The Food Alliance Shellfish Certification Program is applicable to North American shellfish producers who produce shellfish from seed to harvest within a defined area and with clear ownership of the shellfish being cultured.  The program does not cover wild harvest. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)