



July 29, 2010

Dear Mr. Pausina,

I am writing today to inform you that based on a review of the data described below, FDA has concluded that the conditions for reopening specified in our agreed upon reopening protocol have been met for finfish and shrimp in the area designated in the July 19, 2010 Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) proposal -- generally those areas within the State of Louisiana east of the Mississippi River, except as identified for continued closure -- and that such seafood should pose no food safety risk associated with contamination from the Deepwater Horizon explosion, fire, and oil spill.

FDA recommends that, prior to any reopening order, LDWF verify that conditions in the area have not changed such that they would present a public health concern. FDA also advises that LDWF continue to be vigilant for re-oiling, and that should re-oiling occur, appropriate steps, including reclosure if necessary, be taken to ensure the continued safety of seafood from the area.

Sensory evaluation of the 84 finfish and shrimp samples for odors indicative of contamination was conducted between July 21 and July 27. No samples demonstrated odors indicative of oil or dispersant contamination. The results are included in the attached table.

After sensory evaluation, the samples were forwarded to one of two chemistry laboratories for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) analysis. Compositing of like species from like sample locations resulted in 34 separate samples for PAH analysis. All samples were analyzed using the LC-Fluorescence method. The chemical analysis was performed on July 28 and 29. PAH levels in all samples are significantly below the levels of concern established in the reopening protocol, which was agreed upon by Louisiana officials, NOAA and FDA. The results are included in the attached table.

Analysis of crab samples has not been completed, so we are unable to affirm the safety of crab harvested from these waters at this time. Testing is underway and we will advise you when the results are in.

I would like to express FDA's appreciation for the ongoing work by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to ensure the safety of Gulf Coast seafood, and to commit FDA's continued support for these collaborative efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald W. Kraemer", is written over the typed name.

Donald W. Kraemer
Acting Deputy Director
Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition

Enclosures