

Oyster Shipping with Island Creek Oyster Company

About

The Island Creek Oyster Company is family run business based in the coastal town of Duxbury in Plymouth County, Massachusetts, United States. A suburb of Boston, located on the South Shore approximately 35 miles to the southeast of the city.

The business comprises a Farm Shop operation, a Raw Bar Events business, a Direct to Chef trucking service and an online consumer shop. The distribution arm, Island Creek Oysters, Inc. sells over 100,000 oysters a week – from the Atlantic Coast to the Pacific Coast, as far north as Canada, and as far south as the Caribbean.

Client Scenario

National Shellfish Sanitation Program mandates that shellfish must be cooled to 50°F within 10 hours of harvesting and transported at or below this temperature.

Individual shipments to consumers or trade partners must be monitored with a time and temperature indicator (TTI) to comply with the regulations as part of a company's HACCP protocols – with full audit trail documentation across the cold chain; from harvesting, processing, packaging and distribution.



Bacterial growth increases when shellfish are exposed to temperatures above 50°F but consumption is safe subject to excursion times.

Island Creek uses FEDEX as a distribution partner for online consumer delivery, including some of the Direct to Chef orders. Customer consignments are shipped in specially manufactured cardboard carriers with frozen gel pack inserts to help maintain core product temperature below 50°F during transit.

However, a delay in transit or repeat exposure to excessive ambient air temperatures when truck doors are opened can affect the integrity of the cold chain. Island Creek recognized that they had room to tighten their systems and extend quality management, even once product is handed to the FEDEX overnight delivery teams – which can sometimes take 2 days

If a customer were to become ill as a result of consuming unsafe oysters, regulations require Island Creek to prove they have maintained temperature controls across the supply chain.

The Timestrip Solution

After market analysis and comparison pilot testing, Island Creek chose to use the Timestrip® PLUS, TP153 TTI to show active temperature monitoring throughout the cold chain.

The temperature indicator has an irreversible notification of temperature breach above 50°F and the length of any cumulative breaches measured in 2 and 4 hour time frames.

The Timestrip® PLUS is activated by finger pressure and attached to the base of the box in-between the two frozen gel packs, prior to the seafood being packed and the box sealed for shipment.



Once delivered, customers have a simple mechanism to visually alert them to a temperature breach and if so, how long it lasted, which in turn allows the customer service teams to advise as to whether they should discard the product or not.

The Timestrip® PLUS indicator also places additional accountability in the hands of FEDEX to fulfil service level agreements.

With the adoption of a Timestrip® PLUS as part of their seafood safety standards regime, Island Creek not only comply with regulations, they build consumer trust and generate loyalty through a demonstrable commitment to direct delivery product quality and freshness.

“We are shipping thousands of individual consignments every year and with a Timestrip® Plus TTI in every box we know that our oysters had a safe trip!”

Island Creek Oyster Company Emily Weedon from Island Creek