



# NOAA FISHERIES

## Office of International Affairs and Seafood Inspection

Dear Colleagues,

We are closely monitoring the COVID-19 situation as it relates to NOAA's Seafood Inspection Program. Above all, we want you to know that our top priority is to ensure the safety of our employees and those of the users of the Seafood Inspection Program. This is a rapidly evolving situation and we continue to track developments and consider how they could potentially impact seafood inspections, particularly audits, product inspections and certifications.

Audits of approved establishments are a cornerstone of our agreements with trading partners and ensure confidence in the seafood market. When we schedule audits and site visits, we take into consideration numerous factors. Right now, one of those factors is the risk associated with COVID-19. To that end, we are managing audit schedules to determine when a site visit is required.

Product inspections may still be necessary to meet a requirement of a buyer or importing country. In those circumstances, we will work with industry on a case by case basis, as requested, to meet these requirements and to determine how best to maximize social distancing for your employees and ours.

Shipment and export certification will continue to be required by importing countries and buyers. Product inspection is often required to issue the certificate. We will continue to work on solutions that will meet certificate requirements and keep commerce moving as much as possible during the pandemic.

Our overarching goal is to keep all our people healthy while minimizing impacts to seafood trade. NOAA and industry must work together as partners to ensure these goals. We are fully committed to continuing to provide quality services to the seafood industry in the safest and most efficient way possible during these turbulent times.