

**15A NCAC 03K .0202 CULLING REQUIREMENTS FOR OYSTERS**

(a) It shall be unlawful to possess oysters that have accumulated dead shell, accumulated oyster cultch material, a shell length less than that specified by proclamation issued under the authority of Rule .0201 of this Section, or any combination thereof that exceeds a five-percent tolerance limit by volume. Oysters shall be culled where harvested and all oysters of less than legal size, accumulated dead shell, and cultch material shall be immediately returned to the bottom from which it was taken. In determining whether the tolerance limit has been exceeded, Marine Fisheries Inspectors shall be authorized and empowered to grade all, or any portion, or any combination of portions of the entire quantity being graded, and in cases of violations, may seize and return to public bottom or otherwise dispose of the oysters as authorized by law the entire quantity being graded or any portion thereof.

(b) This Rule shall not apply to oysters imported from out-of-state solely for shucking by shucking and packing plants permitted by the Division of Marine Fisheries.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-136; 113-137; 113-182; 143B-289.52;  
Eff. January 1, 1991;  
Amended Eff. March 1, 1996; September 1, 1991;  
Temporary Amendment Eff. July 1, 1999;  
Amended Eff. May 1, 2017; August 1, 2000;  
Readopted Eff. March 15, 2023.*