

NOTICE

CRD Notice: 2018-02

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF SEED OYSTERS IN THE PIANKATANK AND GREAT WICOMICO RIVERS FOR PRIVATE INDUSTRY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PLANTING ON PRIVATE OYSTER GROUND LEASES

NOTICE is hereby given that the Virginia Marine Resources Commission will be offering for harvest, by the private oyster industry, approximately 17,000 bushels of seed oysters from the Piankatank River and 10,000 bushels of seed oysters from the Great Wicomico River.

THE COMMISSION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE CHANGES IN THE PROGRAM AT ANY TIME.

GENERAL:

Harvest dates will be **March 19, 2018 through March 30, 2018.**

The harvest area will be designated and marked by VMRC personnel.

Harvesting will be done by standard oyster dredges, hand scrape or hand tongs. All harvesting will be completed by 2:00 p.m.

Seed oysters will be unculled and a minimum count of 400 oysters/bushel in the Piankatank and Great Wicomico Rivers.

VMRC personnel will be present to measure and/or tally and document each harvester's daily catch. All bushels shall be standard Virginia bushels. Receipts for seed harvested will be provided to participants and will provide a record of shells to be replanted or monies to be paid.

All seed oysters harvested may only be replanted on private ground leases in Virginia waters.

These seed oysters are being made available to the private oyster industry on the basis that for every bushel of seed oysters harvested by private industry, two bushels of shell will be planted on the same public beds by the buyer of the seed oysters in the summer of 2018. Shells will be replaced by the buyer of seed oysters.

VMRC personnel will be present for all planting of shells back on to the harvest areas. VMRC will also tally and direct replanting of shells in the Great Wicomico and Piankatank Rivers.

RESPONSE DEADLINE:

All interested buyers must contact the Conservation and Replenishment Department by mail, fax, or e-mail no later than **March 14, 2018.** The response must indicate the amount desired (200-500 bushel increments)

Individuals may only apply for seed oyster harvest in one river location, either the Piankatank or Great Wicomico River.

If all responses should total more than the 17,000 bushels in the Piankatank and 10,000 bushels in the Great Wicomico River, then the requests will be adjusted proportional to the number of bushels requested.

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