

Updated advice on processing waste (February 2008)

There is no easy answer to the problems of seafood waste disposal, particularly shell. This paper summarises the latest information and sources of advice.

Raw waste

Raw waste (including Nephrops shell) has been banned from landfill since 2003. In some parts of the country, local authorities have been taking it for landfill but the occurrence of this has dwindled over the past year. Local authorities have been notifying industry of the proposed changes in their areas and the use of landfill is getting more difficult. If companies are land-filling raw seafood waste at the moment, it is unlikely to continue indefinitely so they should be considering alternative arrangements.

Cooked waste

Cooked shellfish waste that is classed as a 'former foodstuff' can continue to go to landfill for another two years. However, there are fewer landfill sites available that accept this type of waste.

Q&A Document

We have produced a Q&A document, based on questions we've been asked, advising what can and cannot be done with waste. It is available via the Seafish website at <http://www.seafish.org/upload/file/legislation/ABPQAV2.pdf>

Options for waste disposal

Composting is one of the cheaper waste disposal routes. It will require a seafood business to pay a composting company to take the material and compost it on their behalf. They mix it in with all their other waste streams and sell the product on. The composted product can be low or high value but the majority of composts are low value. Commercial composters make the most money on their gate fees ie how much they charge to take the waste material. At the moment, composting costs about >£40/tonne but this is one of the cheapest outlets for seafood waste. You can only use an animal by-product approved facility - you cannot just send it off for unlicensed composting.

Other options for disposing of waste are digestion, rendering and incineration. These are all typically more expensive than composting - digestion is usually ~£60/t, rendering >£80/t and incineration >£150/t. These costs vary depending on where you are in the UK and additional transport costs.

Disposal at sea - there is much discussion about whether this should be permitted for seafood processing wastes without restriction. Unfortunately, this is not currently the case. You need a license to dispose at sea of any processing waste from onshore facilities, and it is more difficult and expensive than envisaged. It does not apply to *Nephrops* and shell with flesh attached. A summary on disposal at sea is available - http://www.seafish.org/upload/file/about_us/Disposal%20of%20Seafood%20waste%20at%20sea%2028_3_06.pdf

Land application is another outlet, but this is primarily only an option for treated animal by-products or for free of flesh shell. *Nephrops* shell is currently not defined as free of flesh because of the residual small amount of flesh left behind. It is possible to treat the material

to ABP standards (drying or heat treatment) but this would incur additional costs as well as costs of applying it to land. A summary on land application is available from the Seafish website at

http://www.seafish.org/upload/file/waste_utilisation/land%20app%20shellfish%20v1.pdf .

For small quantities of waste, the cheapest option is using it as a supply of bait for local fishermen. This is obviously difficult for large quantities. The material must only be used as bait in a pot or on a hook; it cannot just be widely distributed on the seabed.

There are ancillary outlets for seafood wastes but very few commercially realised in the UK.

In-house treatment – it is possible to treat waste in-house but the process needs to be approved or registered by the local animal health office. Details of local offices can be found via the Government links below.

Waste Disposal Companies

For lists of companies that are approved to take/treat animal by-products use the following;

- England & Wales – the Defra website - <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/by-prods/approvals/list.htm>.
- Scotland - Scottish Government - <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Agriculture/animal-welfare/policies/PolicyInfo/AnimalByProducts/Premises>
- Northern Ireland - <http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/animal-health/animal-by-products/animal-by-products-approved-presmises.htm>

The lists are separated into different types of waste treatment. They are the most up to date lists of ABPR approved premises available. Unfortunately, the companies' contact details must be found elsewhere.

Legislation – Seafish is continuing discussions with the Commission about the inclusion of shell in the ABPR.

Projects

We have just completed a project on crustacea processing waste management. For further information go to the B2B site at <http://www.seafish.org/b2b/info.asp?p=282>

An application on the use of shell in aggregates funded through the Seafish Industry Project Fund is nearing completion. Information on this project is also available on the Seafish B2B site at <http://www.seafish.org/b2b/area.asp?p=83>