

# Raw and Beyond Canadian Oysters



Intercity Packers has been a reliable supplier of fresh oyster across Canada for over 40 years. Thanks to direct relationships built with Canadian oysters farms and our strategic procurement team over the past 4 decades, Intercity Packers offers the greatest variety of oysters. As a certified shellfish shucker packer distributor, we ensure the highest standards of quality are met before delivering fresh oysters to your establishment.



## A SHELLFISH RICH HISTORY

The Olympia Oyster (*Ostrea lurida*) is the only species native to the coast of British Columbia, but were depleted in the early 1900s. As a replacement, a non-indigenous species, the Pacific oyster (*Crassostrea gigas*) was introduced for aquaculture purposes. Pacific oysters are large and fast-growing, and have a distinctly fluted shell. Now farm-raised oysters are Canada's second most valuable shellfish aquaculture species, after mussels, and B.C. is the leading oyster producing province in Canada.

## PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS

- 100% Ocean Wise recommended
- Healthy and environmentally sustainable
- Options for year-round availability
- Certified as a shellfish shucker packer
- Close relationship with oyster farmers for timely shipping
- Quality packaging & salted ice to lock in freshness
- Exacting standards for food handling & quality control

Available through Intercity Packers Meat & Seafood.

[IntercityPackers.ca](http://IntercityPackers.ca)

*Yes, we do!*

# Comparing Pacific and Atlantic Oysters

Oysters from the East and West coast of Canada have their own unique characteristics that set them apart from one another in terms of taste, texture, and appearance. The location of the oyster farm changes how they taste and look. Let's dive a little deeper on their significant differences:

CATEGORY	PACIFIC OYSTER	ATLANTIC OYSTER
<b>Latin Name</b>	Crassostrea Gigas	Crassostrea Virginica
<b>Other Common Name</b>	West Coast Oyster	Canadian Maritime or East Coast Oyster
<b>Flavour Profile</b>	The Pacific Ocean's waters are generally milder, resulting in a less salty and more subtle flavour. Tend to have a more sweet and fruity flavour, with some claiming to taste notes of melon, cucumber, and citrus.	The Atlantic ocean is saltier, causing a more briny, mineral-like flavour. Known for their complex, layered flavours, which can include hints of seaweed, minerals, and sometimes a buttery taste.
<b>Texture</b>	Generally softer and more delicate	Often described as firmer and chewier
<b>Size</b>	Greater range in sizes. Larger and plumper, and often referred to as "meaty" oysters.	Generally available in the smaller sizes, with an average length of about 2 to 3 inches.
<b>Appearance</b>	Smoother, more polished-looking shell and can range in colour from black to brown to white. Often have a more uniform, rounded shape.	Have a more textured shell and can range in colour from brown to grey to white. Shell can have a more elongated, teardrop like shape.
<b>Shelf Life</b>	Approximately 10-14 days or more from date of harvest.	Have a longer shelf-life of up to 30 days from date of harvest.

## UNDERSTANDING OYSTER SIZES

Culling is the process of sorting oysters by shape and size. If you intend to serve raw, shucked oysters, it is important to order only a certain size of oysters from Intercity Packers

SHELL SIZE	PACIFIC OYSTER	ATLANTIC OYSTER	SAFE TO EAT RAW
3" or less	Extra Small	Cocktail	✓
3" to 3.5"	Small	Small	
3.5" to 4"	Small	Large	
4" to 5"	Medium	Large	
5" or more	Large	Large	



# Best Practices For Receiving Fresh Oyster Shipments

Fresh oysters go through extensive quality control checks by Intercity Packers' quality assurance team and our suppliers before reaching your establishment. To ensure food safety is achieved, our team of seafood experts recommends following these practices once you receive an oyster shipment.

## COLLECT THE SHELLFISH HARVEST TAG

All shellfish, including oysters, have a robust tractability system in Canada. Your establishment serves shellfish to the general public, therefore your team plays a key role in the shellfish's supply chain. You will find the shellfish harvest tags affixed to each package of shellfish in your shipment from Intercity Packers. The tags are required to identify and track the shellfish from the harvest area through to the end consumer.

- Record the date that shellfish from a new lot were first served and sort the tags by date served. When the same lot is served over multiple days or there are multiple tags with the same lot record the last day of service for that lot. Keep all shellfish tags even if they have the same lot number.
- Keep tags in a safe, dry place at your location for a minimum of 90 days. If there is an illness investigation, invoices must be made available as well.



## DOUBLE CHECK THE FRESHNESS

When we refer to oysters that are “fresh” we’re actually referring to oysters that are alive. Every oyster should be alive when its time to prepare to serve your guests. This is paramount for food safety, so here’s how to check if the oysters are still alive upon delivery from Intercity Packers:

- **Check that the oyster shells have no broken or damaged areas on the shell, and are tightly shut.** If the shell isn't closed - gently tap it and an oyster that is alive will close.
- **Check the smell.** Fresh oysters should smell like the ocean and lightly briny and not overly fishy smell.
- **Check the weight.** Oysters should feel a bit heavy because a freshly harvested oyster will still have liquor inside.

As a final check once the oyster has been shucked, you'll want to check for liquor in the shell around the meat. The liquor is the clear liquid found inside of the oyster that serves as the primary vessel of the oyster's unique flavour.



# Tips For Serving Fresh Oysters On Your Menu

Whether your menu offers raw or cooked oysters, having the best quality oysters is a must. Follow our seafood team's key tips listed below on how to store, clean, shuck and serve oysters for a memorable dining experience for your guests that highlights the freshness of the oysters.

## PROPER STORAGE OF LIVE OYSTERS

Now that you have removed any dead oysters, you'll want to store the oyster whole so the inventory stays alive until you're ready to serve and shuck for your guests:

- Keep them as cold as possible without freezing in the refrigerator. The optimal temp. is 2°C for storing oysters.
- Oysters can sit on a bed of ice the with the cup of the shell down in the ice, but replenish the ice often to prevent them from fully submerging for an extended period of time as the ice melts down.
- Freshwater kills the oysters, so heavily salt the ice the oysters are stored on.



## SHUCK OYSTERS LIKE A PRO

Your guests eat with their eyes first, so clean the shells then it is time to shuck! Gather your tools, which includes a stiff-bristled brush, a shucking tool, kitchen towel, and protective gloves.

1. Start by cleaning the oysters. Rinse the oyster under the stream of cold running water, and with the brush, scrub each shell to remove any dirt, sand and debris.
2. To shuck, position the oyster cup side down on the towel on top of a stable surface.
3. Locate the hinge, which is where the flat top shell and bottom cup come together. While holding the oyster firmly down, insert the shucker into the hinge. Twist the blade and apply enough pressure to open the shell.
4. With the hinge released, continue moving the blade forward to release the oyster from the top shell.
5. Discard the top shell. Repeat the process to loosen the meat from the bottom shell. Once released, you can flip the meat over for a better appearance, just avoid spilling oyster liquor!
6. Place the oysters on a bed of crushed ice to keep them chilled and serve to your guests immediately.



# Intercity Packers Oyster Sheet

Published in July 2024. All information provided is for comparison purposes. For up-to-date specifications and availability, subscribe to our weekly fresh sheet.

PRODUCT NAME	CODE	SIZE	SHELL SIZE	LATIN NAME	PACK	CULTIVATION METHOD	CATCH AREA	FLAVOUR PROFILE
Beach	15301140	Small	3 - 4 inches	Crassostrea gigas	5 dz	Intertidal beach cultured	Various spots on B.C. coast	Hard shell with smooth edges and reliable for being full of meat with a clean ocean salty flavour.
	10000914	Medium	4 - 5 inches		2.5 dz			
	10000917	Large	5+ inches					
	15301160	Extra Large	6+ inches					
Chef Creek	15313120	Extra Small	2.5 - 3 inches	Crassostrea gigas	5 dz	Tray cultured	Baynes Bay, B.C.	Distinct shallow cup, dark mantle and a creamy, and sweet ivory meat with high brininess.
Chef Creek Beach	15313110	Extra Small	2 - 3.5 inches	Crassostrea gigas	5 dz	Intertidal beach cultured	Various spots on B.C. coast	Distinct shallow cup, dark mantle and a creamy, and sweet ivory meat with high brininess.
Fanny Bay	15325110	Extra-Small	2.5 - 3 inches	Crassostrea gigas	5 dz	Tray cultured & beach hardened	Baynes Bay, B.C.	Known for their "full-slurp" effect, this oyster has a full body and mineral flavours of the Baynes Sound. Tough shell and firmer meat from being tossed around on the rocky beaches.
	15325120	Small	3 - 4 inches					
	10000118	Medium	4 - 5 inches					
Gwi Gwi	11100256	Extra Small	2.5 - 3 inches	Crassostrea gigas	5 dz	Suspended from floating rafts & tumbled	Traditional territory of the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations	The delicate but firm textures and a briny balance echoes the pristine Treadwell Bay, these oysters offer a taste of sweet creaminess, with a fresh flavour.
Kisu	10000638	Extra Small	2.5 - 3 inches	Crassostrea gigas	5 dz	Tray cultured & manually tumbled	Baynes Bay, B.C.	Deep water grown means these oysters have plump, sweet meat.
Kusshi	15326110	Extra Small	up to 2.5 inches	Crassostrea gigas	5 dz	Tray cultured & manually tumbled	Deep Bay, B.C.	One of the world's top oysters. Very round and uniform shell that's incredibly plump. Meat has a buttery texture and has a sweet, mildly fruity finish.
Little Wing	15301176	Extra Small	2.5 - 3 inches	Crassostrea gigas	5 dz	Suspension cages & beach hardened	Okeover Inlet in Desolation Sound, B.C.	Sweet, well balanced oyster in a distinctive deep cup shell with a fresh after taste.
Paradise	15301186	Small	3 - 4 inches	Crassostrea gigas	5 dz	Tray cultured & beach hardened	Deep Bay, B.C.	One slurp from the polished, fluted shells of these light citrusy oysters will take you to paradise.
Read Island	15301192	Extra Small	2.5 - 3 inches	Crassostrea gigas	5 dz	Deepwater & tray grown	Read Island, Discovery Island Archipelago, B.C.	This oyster has a mild, fresh flavour with a sweet finish that shines when served raw on the half-shell.
Royal Miyagi	15314110	Extra Small	2.5 - 3 inches	Crassostrea gigas	5 dz	Suspended line & beach cultured	Sunshine Coast, B.C.	Smooth textured, mild flavour with a clean kiwi-like aftertaste.
Sunseekers	10000618	Extra Small	2.5 - 3 inches	Crassostrea gigas	5 dz	Floating bag & beach hardened	Baynes Bay, B.C.	These plump oysters use an innovative floating bag system and finished in the Baynes Sound where the waves rock them into shape. This balanced oyster is both firm, sweet and salty.
West Coast Wild Beach	10000526	Small	2.75 - 3.5 inches	Crassostrea gigas	5 dz	Suspension cages & beach hardened	Okeover Inlet in Desolation Sound, B.C.	A light clean flavour and kiwi-like finish. Sweet, round with a deep cup and plump with beautiful fluted edges.
Barstool	10000965	Cocktail	2.5 - 3 inches	Crassostrea virginica	8.33 dz	Suspension cages	Rustico Bay, Prince Edward Island	Light coloured shells and clean, crisp flavours.
Irish Point	10000605	Cocktail	2.5 - 3 inches	Crassostrea virginica	8.33 dz	Suspension cages	Hope River, Prince Edward Island	Enchantingly green shells with excellent meat quality and superb salty taste from strong tides.
Naked Islander	10000522	Cocktail	2.5 - 3 inches	Crassostrea virginica	8.33 dz	Suspension cages	Rustico Bay, Prince Edward Island	A plump silky meat with a unique combination of salty and sweet flavour.
Pink Moon	10000777	Cocktail	2.5 - 3 inches	Crassostrea virginica	8.33 dz	Off-bottom cultured	New London Bay, Prince Edward Island	Characterized for their wonderful, salty taste with a clean flavour and a delightful sweet finish, like eating the essence of the ocean.
Shiny Seas	15309140	Petite	2.5 - 3 inches	Crassostrea virginica	8.33 dz	Floating bag & beach hardened	New London Bay, Prince Edward Island	The cups are full, with plump meats that have an immediate salty taste and end with a subtle, sweet finish.
Sweet Island Kiss	10000523	Small	3 - 3.5 inches	Crassostrea virginica	8.33 dz	Suspension cages	Rustico Bay, Prince Edward Island	A salty punch with a sweet yet crisp finish.