

## COMMERCIAL SHELLFISH LEASE (STATE LEASE)

*The Applicant should take the following steps to acquire a state lease.*

- Step 1 - Contact Department of Natural Resources (912) 264-7218 (for charts showing approved growing areas, regulations, and areas already under Lease) and Marine Extension (912) 264-7268 (for methods and suggestions for harvest.
- Step 2 - Select area for development. If the area is outside and approved shellfish growing area, contact the Department of Natural Resources.
- Step 3 - Contact the Department of Agriculture (912) 963-2500 for related permits and regulations for sale of shellfish (dependent on your plans for wholesale or retail sales, shucking, canning, etc.)
- Step 4 - Provide to the Department of Natural Resources:
1. Letter requesting a lease and duration for lease.
  2. A verbal description of the lease area written in terms easily transferable to the environmental setting (e.g., West Bank of the Duplin River from the mouth of the River emptying into Doboy Sound to the northern extent of the highland known as Little Sapelo). Include in the lease proposal adjacent landholders names, addresses, and phone numbers. These can be obtained from the County Tax Assessor Office. Also include in the description the species to be harvested.
  3. Nautical chart showing the area proposed for lease.
  4. A verbal description of how you plan to develop the shellfish resources in the proposed lease area - **BE SPECIFIC**.
  5. Copies of all permits issued by the Department of Agriculture, commercial fishing license, and commercial boat license.
  6. Names of employees authorized to harvest shellfish on the lease and names of vessels if applicable.
  7. A \$50.00 certified check, cashiers check, or money order payable to Georgia Department of Natural Resources (returned if you fail to secure the lease).
  8. Any other information you consider necessary or requested in Step 1.

*The Department of Natural Resources will take the following steps.*

- Step 5 - The Department of Natural Resources will evaluate your request. If approved a draft lease will be written which may contain special conditions. The request for a lease of State lands will be published in local newspapers for two weeks with an invitation for competitive bids to develop the resource within the lease area. The draft lease will be available for viewing during this period. If harvest rights are questioned, the Attorney General's Office will be contacted for guidance before proceeding with the lease request. This can be very time consuming.
- Step 6 - All bids will be publicly opened and the lease will be awarded to the bidder with the best management plan.
- Step 7 - If the draft lease requires considerable revision, move to Step 4. If not, the lease will be signed and notarized. It will be forwarded to the Commissioners Office along with our recommendation for approval. If approved, you will be provided with a copy of the lease and a master collecting permit authorizing harvest of shellfish. If unapproved, the applicant may resubmit their request.