



# SC-20: Taxonomic status of rope-grown seed mussels in Swansea dock

Fowey Shellfish Company started in 1995 when Dave Hancock had the vision to create Cornwall's first offshore rope grown mussel farm. As environmentally aware producers, Fowey are committed to three core values: Organic produce, sustainable produce and traceable produce.

Fowey organic mussels are grown from wild seed caught at sea. The company is able to demonstrate traceability in their products from 'port to plate'. However, the movement of seed mussel can sometimes raise ecological concerns as different varieties and species can be moved between waters. Rising sea temperatures around the coast of the UK have led to the northward spread of the mussel species *Mytilus galloprovincialis*, and although this species is still an excellent seafood, hybridisation can occur with the farmed Blue mussel *Mytilus edulis*. It is thought that this hybridisation may affect meat yield and shell thickness which in-turn reduces the value of the stock.



**Impact**

With this in mind Fowey approached the Shellfish Centre to collaborate on an investigation of the taxonomic credentials of the seed mussel on grow-out lines at their Swansea Dock facilities. This project aims to develop minimally destructive molecular testing protocols which could be used for taxonomic confirmation of species applied to any future seed mussel transfers and grow-out stock.



**Project Officer**  
David Smyth & Jenna Alexander are the lead researchers for SC-18

**Project Partner**  
Fowey Shellfish Co.



The Shellfish Centre is a research and innovation initiative supporting development of the shellfish sector in Wales. The Centre will collaborate with businesses to deliver science to support growth. The main focus of the project is shellfish aquaculture and the related supply chain, with scope also for research to support new/ underexploited shellfisheries and aquaculture of non-shellfish species that are compatible with shellfish production

A Research & Innovation Initiative: Supporting the development of the Shellfish Sector in Wales

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