



Company

Dungarvan Shellfish Ltd T/A Harty Oysters

Sector

Shellfish

Chief products

Oysters



Sustainability headlines

- Protection of local biodiversity from alien invasive species through full risk assessment.
- 100% self-sufficient in seed supply from the company's nursery facility by 2019.
- Zero plastic wrap to landfill by 2019.

Background

Dungarvan Shellfish Ltd was established in 1985 and produces 600 tonnes of oysters annually with an annual turnover of €2.2 million.

Who we are

Dungarvan Shellfish Ltd is a family-run company, growing oysters (*Crassostrea gigas*) in Dungarvan Bay, Co Waterford. Oysters are grown from seed using the bag and trestle method and are cultivated naturally in the sea, without additional feed or the administration of chemicals. The Oyster is a natural filter and extracts phosphorous from sea water, meaning the water is cleaner after the oyster has fed- an added bonus for the environment.

Currently, one third of total seed supply is derived from the onsite nursery and the company aims to become self-sufficient in seed supply by 2019 (see 'What we are doing better'). Eventually, Dungarvan Shellfish will be selling surplus produce to other Irish oyster producers, as they believe, and have proven, that this method increases the survival rate of the oyster as the oyster has acclimatized to Irish waters, directly out of a hatchery.

Oyster grading is carried out at a plant adjacent to the shore. The company employs 20 full time staff, extending to 28 on a seasonal basis. The company is changing its sale routes and are now packing for the final customer. The Origin Green status gives our customers confidence in our product.



Our sustainability credentials

All company operations depend on a clean environment and, in recognition of this; Dungarvan Shellfish Ltd received [ECOPACT](#) certification in 2015. In support of environmentally sound business practices, the company is committed to:

- Full compliance with the law and relevant voluntary standards;
- Support and training of employees to fulfil the company's environmental policy;
- Continued improvement of environmental performance;
- Reducing waste, conserving energy and exploring new opportunities for re-use and recycling;

- Actively taking part in shore clean-up operations; and,
- Actively promoting and improving the local area by engaging with relevant governmental and non-governmental bodies, as well as the local community.

Origin Green in action

Participation in Origin Green allows the company to, firstly, focus on increasing sales and competitiveness, with a view to opening up new markets on the strength of its sustainability credentials; secondly, increase its customer base and improve customer satisfaction due to verifiable actions through Origin Green and [ECOPACT](#) certification; and, thirdly, improve its standing in the community and increase recognition of the company's contribution to a healthy environment.

Measurable objectives as part of this include:

- Becoming 100% self-sufficient in seed supply from nursery facility by 2019;
- Undertaking full risk-assessment in cooperation with the relevant marine body ([BIM](#)) to protect local biodiversity from alien invasive species;
- Reduce amount of plastic wrap disposed at landfill, ultimately achieving zero plastic wrap to landfill by 2019; and,
- Following feasibility study, the installation of rainwater harvesting system for wash down and toilets.



Social responsibility

Through Origin Green, Dungarvan Shellfish Ltd will increase interaction with the local community and build awareness of its actions supporting the local environment. It will also seek to provide the community with access to locally produced oysters.

The company provides sponsorship to the local rugby and hockey clubs, access for schoolchildren through offering school tours and is an active participant in the Dungarvan food festival. It is also a member of the [Royal National Lifeboat Institution](#).

What we're doing better

A recent development in the company has been the establishment of an oyster nursery, meaning that smaller seed (1.5mm) can be purchased and grown in this facility prior to the intertidal bag and trestle stage. Nursery seed is sourced from a single dedicated hatchery in France. The nursery comprises two ponds that fill naturally on high tides. As oysters are filter feeders, there is no need to add any additives, e.g. algae, making this an entirely natural process.



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