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Theme: Marketing

Session: WeB2 - Processing

Title: **Supply Disruptions following Environmental Events:
Implications for Molluscan Shellfish Growers and Processors**

Author(s): Sherry Larkin , Charles Adams

Abstract: Environmental events such as tropical storms, hurricanes, and harmful algal blooms (HABs) have the potential to disrupt the commercial production and supply of certain marine species. In Florida, the red-pigmented dinoflagellate *Karenia brevis* (a particular type of naturally occurring HAB) has contaminated molluscan shellfish beds resulting in periodic fishery closures. The 2004 hurricane season also caused heavy losses of cultured clams along the Gulf coast of Florida. Oyster harvesters and clam growers have argued that such disruptions in supply result in lost market channels that have lingering effects on wholesale demand, including the potential for losing some wholesale markets entirely. To investigate this issue, molluscan shellfish producers and buyers in Florida were surveyed regarding their knowledge, experience, and opinions of the impacts of recent environmental events. This information will provide insight into the market effect of policy changes that may influence the availability of traditional molluscan shellfish supplies. For example, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's threat to close the summer harvest of oysters in the Gulf region for the raw halfshell market may result in long-term market changes that could impede the re-establishment of markets during the remaining months of the year. This information will be supplemented with landings data and harvest data from the Florida Division of Aquaculture that maintains records of closure days for shellfish harvesting regions.