The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

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PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

August 5, 2010

Seafood test results from The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station help to re-open fishing waters in the Gulf of Mexico

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New Haven, CT – The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) has been collaborating with scientists in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and states in testing shrimp and finfish from the oil-spill area of the Gulf of Mexico. New highly sensitive and specific methods (liquid chromatography with a fluorescence detection system) are being used to analyze seafood samples for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, chemicals associated with petroleum.

Test results from the CAES and the US FDA Forensic Chemistry Center in Cincinnati have revealed that potentially harmful oil-residue contaminants in shrimp and finfish from sampled areas were below that which would cause a health concern. These findings had impact because a portion of the state commercial fishing waters off the coasts of Louisiana and Florida have been reopened. Analyses of seafood samples from other oil-spill areas will continue for several months. It is expected that about 18 other state and federal laboratories will be activated as a part of the National Food Emergency Response Network under the guidance of the US FDA to meet the heavy workload. "The research and collaborative efforts of our scientists in developing new analytical testing procedures are paying dividends" said Dr. Louis A. Magnarelli, Director of the CAES. "We, along with our federal and state partners, have provided the tools for other chemists to use in ensuring a safe food supply."