Invitation letter to BTSF National Contact Points seeking applications for BTSF training activities on

Production and trade of bivalve molluscs within and into the EU

HaDEA/2022/OP/0016

Valid as of 01/01/2025

1. *Course objectives*

General objective

The organisation of training activities are categorised in 2 levels:

- Basic level, delivered through an eLearning solution.
- **Advanced level**, which will entail the exchange of experiences between the representatives of the different countries. There will be 4 face-to-face sessions and one virtual class, and a total of 150 participants for the advanced level.

2. *e-Learning course*

The e-Learning course has been **accessible since December 2024, with a course completion duration limited to one calendar year for participants.**

The eLearning course is open to all competent authority staff in EU Member States and non-EU countries.

Starting from December 2024, officials interested in learning about LBMs have the opportunity to apply for the e-Learning course "Production and trade of bivalve molluscs within and into the EU" through the BTSF ACADEMY LMS (link). The National Contact Points (NCPs) validate suitable applicants in the TMS.

This e-Learning course targets staff from competent authorities in EU Member States and selected non-EU countries. Specifically, the training is designed for officials:

- Who are, primarily, field inspectors implementing official controls of bivalves molluscs from classified production areas and control activities in the bivalves molluscs production chain ;
- Who are at headquarters' level involved in planning official controls and development of monitoring programme of bivalve molluscs from classified production areas and control and monitoring activities in the bivalves molluscs production chain.

Specific objectives of the e-Learning course are to give participants:

- a good understanding of the risks posed by the consumption of bivalve molluscs;
- the legislation that is intended to provide the basis for control of those risks;
- the practical application of those controls.

3. *Training dates and locations*

Four 4-day face-to-face sessions and one virtual classroom will be delivered between September 2025 and November 2026 with approximately 30 people in each session.

The course agenda is attached (Annex 3).

Table 1: Training dates and Location

Year	Training sessions	Locations	Proposed dates	Registration deadline
2025	F2F 1	Rennes, France	08/09/2025 – 12/09/2025	**02/07/2025**
2026	F2F 2	Vigo, Spain	13/04/2026 – 17/04/2026	13/12/2025
	F2F 3	Thessaloniki, Greece	18/05/2026 – 22/05/2026	18/01/2026
	F2F 4	Chioggia (Venice), Italy	14/09/2026 – 18/09/2026	14/05/2026
	VC	Online	November 2026 (dates to be confirmed)	July 2026

A reminder will be sent to NCPs before each event.

4. Selection criteria for participants

Participant must:	1. Fulfil the eligibility criteria
	2. Meet the minimum requirements
	3. Be selected using the evaluation criteria

1. Eligibility criteria for Face to face course and virtual classroom on production and trade of bivalves molluscs within and into the European Union (EU)
✓ Staff from competent authorities in EU Member States and selected non-EU countries. Specifically, the training is designed for officials: ✓ Who are, primarily, field inspectors implementing official controls of bivalve molluscs from classified production areas and control activities in the bivalve molluscs production chain; ✓ Who are at headquarters' level involved in planning official controls and development of monitoring programme of bivalve molluscs from classified production areas and control and monitoring activities in the bivalve mollusc production chain. ✓ Participants who attend the advanced F2F and VC training sessions can have either achieved a 70% result on the e-learning post-test or be considered by their respective NCP as having the level required to take an advanced course. Only **eligible participants** should be further assessed against the minimum requirements below.

Participants must meet the minimum requirements below to ensure they can follow and fully participate in this course. Participants who do not meet the minimum requirements should not be proposed for the training.

2. Minimum requirements for Face to face course and virtual classroom on production and trade of bivalves molluscs within and into the European Union (EU)	**Yes/No**
Participant must: • have completed the previous eLearning course OR • have worked in functional areas of LBM and have a professional experience in the field They also must: • be in a position to provide training to other colleagues and share the experience following their attendance to the training • be able to understand and speak English in order to participate actively in the training session	

The evaluation criteria should be used as a tool to prioritise participation (higher score indicates higher priority), but there is no minimum score necessary.

	3. Evaluation criteria for Face to face course and virtual classroom on production and trade of bivalves molluscs within and into the European Union (EU)	Enter Score
a)	Completion of an eLearning training module on topic related to this field. Course can be BTSF or other eLearning training activity e.g. FAO, WOAH etc. Completion of eLearning training module on this topic gives BTSF NCPs an additional criterion to consider but is not obligatory for course attendance. <u>Scoring</u> eLearning course completion on topic X related activities = E+	
b)	Experience in implementing this topic within a competent authority. <u>Scoring</u> no experience = 0 points; < 2 years = 5 points; 2-5 years = 7.5 points; > 5 years = 10 points	
c)	Contribution towards this topic (advanced outcomes). <u>Scoring</u> no experience = 0 points; < 2 years = 5 points; 2-5 years = 7.5 points; > 5 years = 10 points	
d)	During the course, participants will be provided with a training package to be used as support dissemination material. Commitment to disseminate the knowledge received is a prerequisite for course participation. <u>Scoring</u> 1. Commitment to distribute the training material among their colleagues = 5 points; 2. Point 1 plus preparing and giving presentations based on the training material for the staff of national competent authorities/uploading training material to national competent authorities' intranets/websites = 7.5 points 3. Points 1, 2 plus preparing informative articles in the professional national journals = 10 points 4. no commitment = **NO INVITATION**	
	Maximum total score	**30 E+**

5. Country allocations

A total of 150 seats will be allocated according to the tables below. Please note that the number of allocated seats for each country may vary.

Table 1. Suggested allocation for EU Member States and Candidate Countries

	Country / suggested seat allocation					
Member States	Austria	1	France	7	Malta	1
	Belgium	1	Germany	4	Netherlands	4
	Bulgaria	4	Greece	7	Poland	1
	Croatia	4	Hungary	1	Portugal	4
	Cyprus	1	Ireland	5	Romania	4
	Czechia	1	Italy	7	Slovakia	1
	Denmark	5	Latvia	1	Slovenia	3
	Estonia	1	Lithuania	1	Spain	7
	Finland	1	Luxembourg	1	Sweden	3
					Total Member States	***81***
Candidate Countries	Albania	2	North Macedonia	0	Türkiye	4
	Bosna and Herzegovina	0	Serbia	0	Ukraine	1
	Montenegro	1	Moldova	0	Georgia	1
					Total Candidate Countries	***9***
Global participation EU Member States and Candidate Countries						***90***

Table 2. Suggested allocation for other non-EU Countries

	Country / suggested seat allocation					
EFTA/ EEA/ countries with special agreements	Iceland	2	Norway	2		
	Lichtenstein	0	UK (Northern Ireland)	2		
	Total EFTA/EEA/Countries with special agreements					***6***
Potential candidate countries	Kosovo		0			
	Total Potential candidate countries					***0***
Non EU countries	Argentina	2	Mauritania	2	Tunisia	3
	Australia	2	Morocco	4	UK (except NI)	3
	Canada	2	Peru	4	United States	2
	Chile	6	South Africa	2	Uruguay	1
	Egypt	0	South Korea	6	Vietnam	6
	Jamaica	1	Switzerland	0		
	Japan	2	Thailand	6		
	Total Non EU countries					***54***
Global participation other non-EU Countries						***60***

See attached the distribution of seats for the session in France taking place in September 2025.

The distribution of seats for the following sessions will follow at a later stage.

You are welcome to nominate more participants for the reserve list than indicated in the table above. If seats will become available, you will be informed in due time.

6. Face-to-face logistical arrangements

In the case of face-to-face training sessions, the European Commission will fund in full the visa, travel, accommodation, meals, and field visit costs for all training participants. No daily allowance will be paid on top of this. Any other costs are to be paid by the participants themselves.

Participants will arrive at the training venues on Monday morning and training will commence on Monday afternoon (depending on travel connections, participants may be requested to arrive at the training venues the day before). Return travel will be on Friday afternoon or the day after according to flight connections.

The contractor team will liaise further with the nominated participants for all logistics and practical aspects.

BTSF Face-to-Face Training - Language pilot project

BTSF is testing the use of AI multilingual translation tools to assist participants' understanding of tutor presentations during face-to-face training. Participants should bring their laptop to the training course and download Microsoft TEAMS software (if permitted) if they wish to avail of these tools.

The intention is that tutors' speech will be translated into text captions in participants' own language and .PPT presentations will also be viewable in their own language at the same time as the presentations are being given in English. Participation to this pilot project is voluntary but encouraged.

7. Virtual Classrooms

The VC session will be organised with the use of the Zoom web conferencing tool. To avoid delays, participants will be invited to take part in a short technical test of their equipment a few days before the training sessions. This will allow participants to test their equipment and view the main features of the VC application platform.

During this brief test, participants will have the chance to learn all the tools of the VC platform. During this meeting, the Event Manager and Assistant Event Manager will also go through the main aspects of the agenda and different sessions that are foreseen. Additionally, in the morning of Day 1 of the VC, time will be dedicated to a technical session to refresh participants on the main features of the platform, and ensure connections are working properly.

The participants should have *a computer with a working camera and audio system (speaker and microphone) as well as a good internet connection.*

Annex 1: Background and main topics covered in training

Background

Previous external reviews of the impact of the Better Training for Safer Food initiative and the experience from the COVID 19 pandemic highlighted the desirability of providing basic-level training through eLearning to meet increasing demands, with face-to-face activities used for advanced level training.

The intention was to develop eLearning courses as a starting point for more targeted and practically oriented face-to-face training. Offering basic-level training through eLearning would also facilitate the identification of participants with similar knowledge level and therefore ease the selection procedures for more advanced face-to-face BTSF courses. This would increase outreach and ensure that large numbers of participants have a clear understanding of the main EU rules applying to the fields covered by the BTSF initiative.

Participants in BTSF eLearning courses are currently officials from EU and non-EU country services involved in verifying compliance with EU rules in the food and feed, animal health and welfare and plant health fields. Participants are currently validated by country competent authorities through their BTSF National Contact Points. The scope of participation may be broadened in the future to include non-officials involved in the implementation of legal requirements.

Main topics covered

At the end of the training participants should understand:

- the requirements, practical application and challenges in classifying and monitoring production areas,
- the required treatment of bivalve molluscs,
- certification requirements in relation to movements within and into the EU,
- the general rules and controls applying to food business operators and,
- the application of good practices to the application of the legislation.

Annex 2: Legislation and guidance

Note: In case a consolidated version of the legislation mentioned below exists, please refer to this updated version.

References

- **Legislation**
- **Regulation (EC) No 178/2002** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety
- **Regulation (EC) No 852/2004** OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs
- **Regulation (EC) No 853/2004** OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin
- **Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005** of 15 November 2005 on microbiological criteria for foodstuffs
- **Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/915** of 25 April 2023 on maximum levels for certain contaminants in food and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006
- **Regulation (EU) 2017/625** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products, amending Regulations (EC) No 999/2001, (EC) No 396/2005, (EC) No 1069/2009, (EC) No 1107/2009, (EU) No 1151/2012, (EU) No 652/2014, (EU) 2016/429 and (EU) 2016/2031 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Regulations (EC) No 1/2005 and (EC) No 1099/2009 and Council Directives 98/58/EC, 1999/74/EC, 2007/43/EC, 2008/119/EC and 2008/120/EC, and repealing Regulations (EC) No 854/2004 and (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Directives 89/608/EEC, 89/662/EEC, 90/425/EEC, 91/496/EEC, 96/23/EC, 96/93/EC and 97/78/EC and Council Decision 92/438/EEC (Official Controls Regulation).
- **Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/624** of 8 February 2019 concerning specific rules for the performance of official controls on the production of meat and for production and relaying areas of live bivalve molluscs in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council
- **Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/627** laying down uniform practical arrangements for the performance of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council
- **Commission Regulation (EC) No 2074/2005** of 5 December 2005 laying down implementing measures for certain products under Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council and for the organisation of official controls under Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, derogating from Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council and amending Regulations (EC) No 853/2004 and (EC) No 854/2004
- **2002/226/EC**: Commission Decision of 15 March 2002 establishing special health checks for the harvesting and processing of certain bivalve molluscs with a level of amnesic shellfish poison (ASP) exceeding the limit laid down by Council Directive 91/492/EEC (notified under document number C(2002) 1009)
- **96/77/EC**: Commission Decision of 18 January 1996 establishing the conditions for the harvesting and processing of certain bivalve molluscs coming from areas where the paralytic shellfish poison level exceeds the limit laid down by Council Directive 91/492/EEC (Text with EEA relevance)
- **Regulation (EU) 2016/429** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health ('Animal Health Law')
- **Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/990** of 28 April 2020 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council, as regards animal health and certification requirements for movements within the Union of aquatic animals and products of animal origin from aquatic animals
- **Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004
- **Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1184/2006 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 104/2000
- **Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 (Animal by-products Regulation)
- **Commission Regulation (EU) No 142/2011** of 25 February 2011 implementing Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for

References

human consumption and implementing Council Directive 97/78/EC as regards certain samples and items exempt from veterinary checks at the border under that Directive

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- **Guidance**

- COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS: Strategic guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture for the period 2021 to 2030
- Aquaculture Advisory Council 2022. Recommendation - Risks of bivalve mollusc pathogen emergence in connection with climate change AAC 2022-19. 1pp. AAC, Brussels
- Global production and trade: https://www.fao.org/fishery/statistics-query/en/home
- EUMOFA analyses and reports: https://www.eumofa.eu/market-analysis
- EU Working Group on Toxin-producing Phytoplankton Monitoring in Bivalve Mollusc Harvesting Areas. 2019. Monitoring of Toxin-producing Phytoplankton in Bivalve Mollusc Harvesting Areas Guide to Good Practice: Technical Application
- Community Guide to the Principles of Good Practice for the Microbiological Classification and Monitoring of Bivalve Mollusc Production and Relaying Areas with regard to Implementing Regulation 2019/627
- EUROPEAN COMMISSION COMMISSION NOTICE on the implementation of food safety management systems covering prerequisite programs (PRPs) and procedures based on the HACCP principles, including the facilitation/flexibility of the implementation in certain food businesses (2016/C 278/01)
- European Commission. COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Guidance document on the implementation of certain provisions of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 on the hygiene of food of animal origin
- European Commission. Guidance document on the implementation of certain provisions of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 On the hygiene of foodstuffs
- GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY GUIDES TO GOOD PRACTICE FOR HYGIENE OR FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE HACCP PRINCIPLES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 9 OF REGULATION (EC) NO 852/2004 ON THE HYGIENE OF FOODSTUFFS AND ARTICLE 22 OF REGULATION (EC) NO 183/2005 LAYING DOWN REQUIREMENTS FOR FEED HYGIENE
- Commission Notice on a guidance document on the implementation of the provisions for the conduct of audits under Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council
- European Commission. COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT providing guidance on certain key questions related to import requirements and the EU rules on food hygiene and on official food controls

Annex 3: Agenda

See attached draft training programme

Annex 4: Training material, outcomes, and dissemination activities

For Face to Face and Virtual Classrooms

By participating in the training, participants:

- register in the BTSF Academy
- provide the details requested by the contractor to register in the BTSF ACADEMY (including the provision of requested Commission EU Login details including the (Unique Identifier at the Commission - uid) -instructions on how to do this will be supplied . Please note participants who do not provide details as requested will NOT be able to register in BTSF ACADEMY and **will NOT receive a certificate of participation**.

When completing the application form, participants will be asked to:

- Give their consent, or not, to attend a group photo of the participants and tutors at the end of the training session and to be filmed, should this be required. At least one session of every series of workshops/videoconferences will be recorded. Photographs and videos will be published in the BTSF Academy in the corresponding training course section and will be visible only to registered users of the BTSF ACADEMY.

Please find more information regarding data protection here:

https://btsfacademy.eu/training/mod/page/view.php?id=417

Training material

All participants will receive a Dissemination Kit electronically to enable them to actively disseminate course knowledge upon their return from BTSF training. Participants attending face-to-face courses will receive the information on the USB key.

Training material in your language

By registering for the BTSF ACADEMY all course participants will have the possibility to translate all the information and training materials in the BTSF ACADEMY, including this course, into 22 European languages and Norwegian and Icelandic. Information and training can also be viewed in additional languages using the automated translation features of common web browsers. This feature is accessible via the languages selector on the BTSF ACADEMY home page. It allows users to:

- Access the content of the BTSF ACADEMY translated to EU MS official languages
- Download documents in a translated version and the original language version to compare formatting/original meaning
- Follow the training activities more comfortably
- Improve their understanding of the topics related to their area/s of work
- Disseminate their acquired knowledge
- Use the materials to train other colleagues in their organisation
- Draft additional training material based on the available information translated into their language/s.

Whilst not perfect, the eTranslation service is continuously improving. The BTSF ACADEMY Team will keep working to ensure the maximum compatibility of the original content and to extend accessibility to a wider audience.

Those users interested in the eLearning modules in their own language in the BTSF ACADEMY and viewing the platform in additional languages to the eTranslation option, should follow the instructions in the ACADEMY

home page here.

Self-assessment test

The training will include an anonymous knowledge test to be carried out at the beginning and at the end of each session in order to measure the impact of the training on the understanding of the participants of the subjects taught.

Participants are expected to agree to carry out the above tests and to reply to the surveys.

Dissemination Kit

This contains the following training materials:

- All course presentations
- Study notes on field trips and group activities/discussions and conclusions thereof
- The course syllabus
- The training information sheet
- Glossary of terms and abbreviations used in the course
- Additional references for further study
- Written guidance on how to actively disseminate course knowledge to colleagues upon participants' return to their home countries, different methodologies/examples/best practice
- Other information and material delivered at the course such as quizzes, FAQs etc.

Dissemination and impact survey

Commitment to disseminate the knowledge received is a prerequisite for course participation.

From 90 days after the respective training session, participants will receive a standard dissemination survey to measure the training impact. This brief survey requests information on any dissemination activities the participant has implemented and any impact in day-to-day working practices following the training.

Participants must complete the dissemination survey to receive a downloadable electronic training certificate.

Annex 5: Contractor contact details

- **The Project is managed by:** SHER s.a. - Dept. JVL Consulting
- **Project Manager:** Fabiana QUADU
- **Training Coordinator for course:** Charlotte CHABANNE

Separate notifications will be sent to National Contact Points for each course and will contain the names and contact details of the Event Manager and Assistant Event Manager as well as logistical details on the event.

All official communication between National Contact Points and the project will be maintained through the functional e-mail address 2022OP0016LBM@jvl-c.com or by phone to +081 32 79 96.

All information on BTSF training can be found at the BTSF Academy website. This website will be regularly updated with details of forthcoming courses.