



Harvest Requirements

Welcome to the Alaska Dive Cooperative. An electronic copy of this document can be found at **akdive.com** under the "members only" section after joining the coop.

ATTENTION:

Please follow these guidelines when anticipating making a delivery. As divers, we understand no delivery or area is perfect - however, each member's diligence from the moment a sea cucumber is plucked from the sea floor, to the delivery at the tender or dock contributes to our level of success. These details will directly affect the price level. We must emphasize this importance. In practice, we track product from the tender to the plant, and follow up with our divers if there are any issues with quality. In a rare circumstance where a vessel or members are unwilling to work with us on improving product quality, we may ask them to sell elsewhere.

Locating Good Product

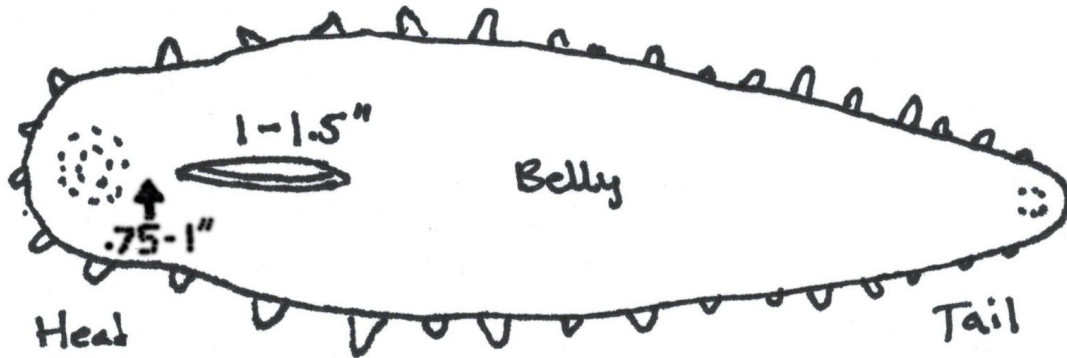
The perfect sea cucumber is both as large and thick skinned as possible. Many areas vary in the quality of their sea cucumber residents. One area might have a higher number of medium sized cukes with thick skins, and another area will have "water balloons" - large cukes but their skin is on the thin side. These qualities are normal and acceptable. However, **please avoid picking pickles at all costs. If you harvest small cucumbers, please sell them elsewhere.** Deliberately selling us thousands of small cukes will raise flags at our facility. Also, if you've been participating in this fishery for any length of time, you'll know that harvesting small or very thin cukes is a waste of your time, and very difficult to accumulate poundage. If you find yourself in a pickle patch, move to new ground as quickly as possible!

Handling Cukes on Deck

As virtually all members will know, cukes will work their way into any vacant space or slit possible. The result is almost always a damaged, #2 product. Please minimize the possibility of pinches or tears in the skin by examining any container or table cukes will be waiting in during their time on your vessel. Common situations are drain slits or grates on tables, leaving cukes in a dive bag on deck, and loose rope handles or dump straps on blue barrels. If you recognize these issues, some common remedies are covering slits with fake turf mat or similar, prioritize emptying a full bag over getting your diver back in the water, and tightening up those gaps in barrel handle/dump strap holes. For all other possibilities out there, please make adjustments to prevent the chances of damage.

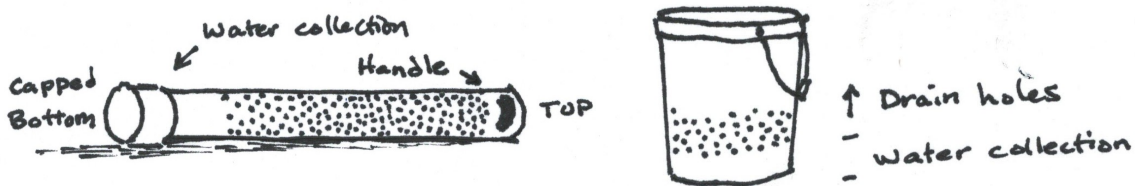
Cutting Your Cukes

A perfectly cut cuke is done with a box cutter type knife. We like folding versions and buy 100 packs of blades. Each cut is made on the center of the belly side, close to - but not all the way to the mouth (head). the length of cut will vary on the dimensions and thickness of the cuke. The optimal cut will let water freely flow from its body as it contracts. Any larger than this, and the cuke will become less desirable as a final product. For most cukes, the slit is 1-1.5" inches long, and made within .75-1" from the mouth. The purpose for these requirements is to prevent cukes from exploding during the cooking process (cut is too small or not cleanly through the skin) or aesthetic downgrading to #2's from sloppy misplaced cuts, or big gaping cuts. Locating the cut at the head end increases efficiency and effectiveness during the cleaning process. Cutting into the head will kill the cuke! Please take that extra fraction of a second to make a good cut. Finally, if pickles make it onto your cutting table by accident, please do not poke and separate from product for sale.



De-watering

Cukes will be de-watered on a table at the tender upon delivery, and before weights are taken. Please take the time to de-water cukes prior to unloading. It will speed up the delivery process, and also give you a more reliable estimate on the poundage you've landed. Minimizing the purchase of water will increase the price level we can set.



Common devices shown above

- **de-watering tube:** 6" diameter pvc pipe with bottom end capped, and holes drilled starting approx 12" up from the bottom. It should be the depth of whatever container sea cucumbers are stored in and submerged vertically to remove water.

- **5 gallon bucket:** drill holes 4 - 6 inches up from the bottom. This is a very quick and cheap way to remove the bulk of water at the surface of your container.