

A synopsis of juvenile oyster disease (JOD) experimental studies in



In the late 1980's juvenile oysters, *Crassostrea virginica*, spawned and cultured in New England and New York, began experiencing up to nearly 100% mortalities in some batches of juveniles. The cause of these mortalities was not ascertained immediately, but examination of dead and dying oysters did not reveal a previously recognized disease syndrome. Early studies showed that it was not an environmental or genetic problem, thus we hypothesized that a new, transmissible disease agent caused the observed mortality. This was verified under laboratory conditions where the disease was readily transmissible. Transmission was enhanced by warm water temperatures, 22–26 °C, and salinities of 18–30 ppt. Also, the infectious agent was filterable and sensitive to erythromycin, supporting the hypothesis that the causative agent may be a protistan parasite in the 2–6 µm size range. No evidence to support a viral or bacterial etiology was found.

Auteurs du document : Earl J. Lewis, C. Austin Farley, Eugene B. Small, Ana M. Baya

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