

Fishing around Marine Farms

You are welcome to use marine farms sites for recreational fishing.

The marine farm development at Wilson Bay in the Firth of Thames has become a very popular destination for recreational fishers, and we hope to see the same results here in the Top of the South. Obviously, we request that you please keep your crew and your boat safe, by keeping a sensible distance from farm servicing and harvesting vessels.



Mussel boats at work

What is there?

Permanent mussel farming lines

Some of the “backbones” may be on the surface (*Surface Longline marine farm, Diagram 2*), while some are suspended 2-5 metres below the surface (*Sub-Surface Longline marine farm, Diagram 3*). Some of the backbones will be double (2 ropes) and others single. See diagrams below

A Schematic layout of a hypothetical mussel line

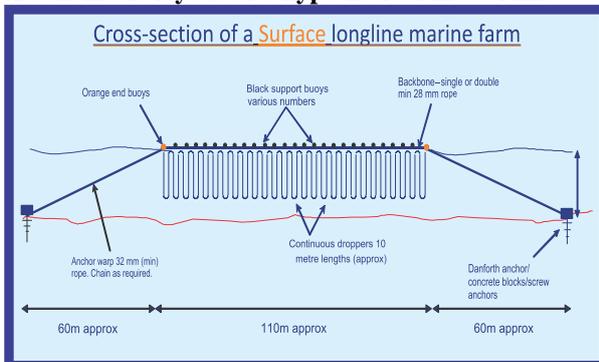


Diagram 2

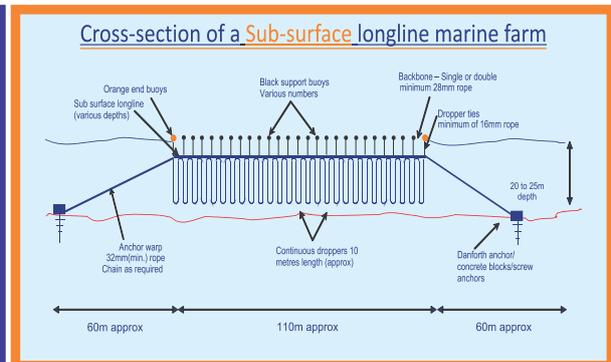


Diagram 3

Seasonal spat catching lines

A block of 20-100 spat catching lines is placed in the water between 1 November and 30 April each year in Golden Bay & Tasman Bay.

The spat catching lines consist of 2–5 kilometres of rope looping down from the backbones to a depth up to 15 metres in length. These drops are spaced at approximately 600mm apart. There is a lot of rope down under the surface. It is these ropes that hold the spat. The ropes will drop vertically at slack water, but will set with the tide.

Once the spat reaches a size suitable for seeding, it is stripped from these spat catching lines and seeded onto growing out lines. (*Mussel crop is not crown to harvest size on spat lines*).



Mussel spat ready for stripping



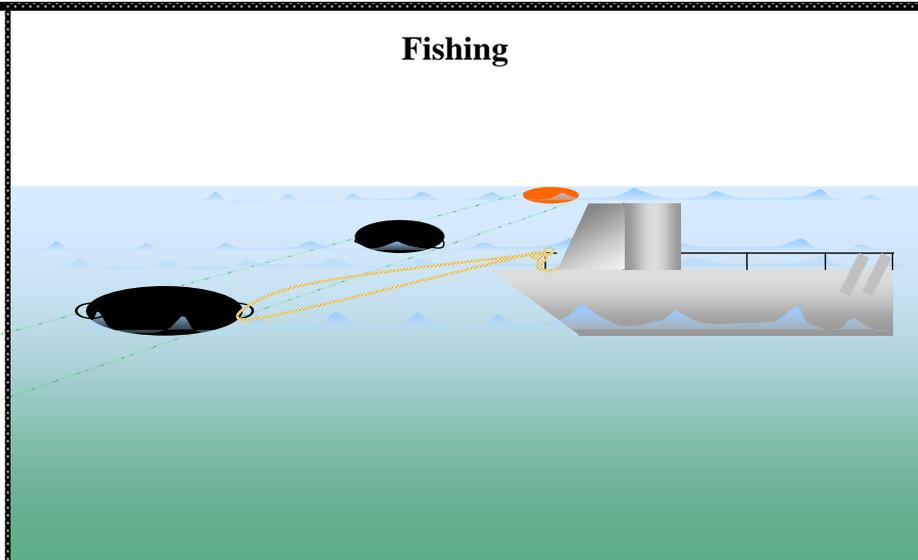
Mussel spat ready for growing-out lines

Recreational Fishing

Below are some general tip and hints when fishing amongst marine farms.

- Attach your boat to the black or orange floats
- Loop a rope through the float handle back to the boat so it is easy to let go when you need to (DO NOT TIE A KNOT ON THE FLOAT). Use enough length of rope so the boat can drop back, say 10-15 metres from the line. This has a few advantages
 - ◇ Your fishing gear is less likely to foul the mussel ropes
 - ◇ When you hook a fish, it will probably head straight for cover or the Mussel ropes, if it makes it to the ropes and the sharp mussel shells, a break-off is almost certain.
 - ◇ Your boat and prop are well clear of the backbones

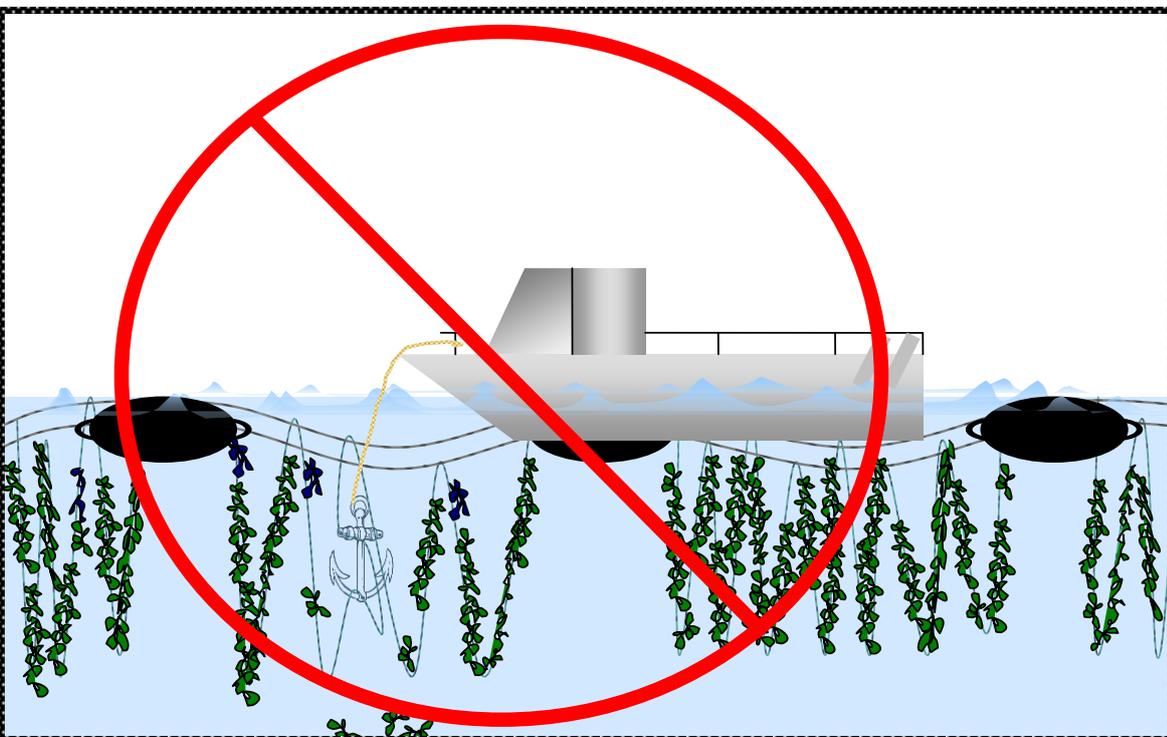
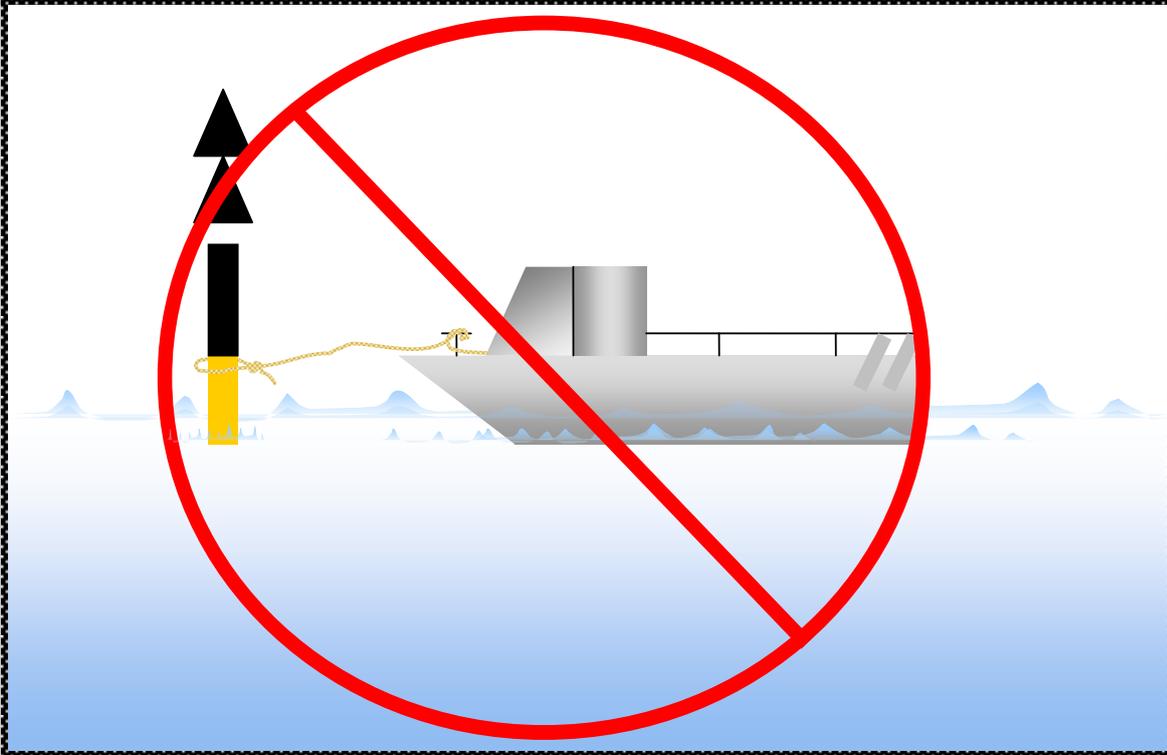
Fishing



A couple of don'ts

Tying up

Please do not tie up to the light buoys', they are an important aid to safe navigation and are susceptible to damage



Please do not anchor anywhere near the lines. There is the risk of your anchor fouling on the backbones, warps or anchors and anyway, attaching to the floats is much easier.

Ablutions

Remember the mussels are being grown for people to eat, so please don't discharge sewerage in the vicinity of the farm. The Marine Pollution Regulations prohibit the discharge of sewerage unless it is discharged further than 500m from a marine farm.

Rubbish

We take pride in looking after the environment and hope that you will too. Please take any rubbish back to shore for appropriate disposal.



Environmental Hot Line - 0800 433 2747

Members of the public are encouraged to phone this number to report any concerns about environmental performance at the farm site.