“Quahog” is pronounced co (to rhyme with “go”) hogs: KO-hog, KWO-hog. Quahog is the name that the Algonquin Indians used for clams.

Quahogs are classified as bivalve mollusks because they have hinged shells made up of two halves, or “valves.” Bivalves obtain their food by “filter feeding.” Water is taken in through a siphon and passed over the gills, which are specially adapted to filter out food (microscopic algae and other small organic particles). The filtered water is then expelled via another siphon. A large clam can filter about a gallon of water in one hour.

The two main types of clams are hardshell and softshell. Hardshell clams generally live in deeper waters, and softshells are usually close to shore, often exposed at low tide. Softshells are generally not eaten raw.

Hard shell clams have unique names based on the size of the clam where they were first originated. Number per pound and hinge size below are approximate:

1. **LITTLE NECK**  | 10-13 per lb.  | 1” hinge
2. **MIDDLE NECK** | 7-9 per lb.   | 1¼” hinge
3. **TOP NECK**    | 5-7 per lb.   | 1½” hinge
4. **CHERRystone** | 3-4 per lb.   | 2” hinge
5. **ChowDer**     | 1-2 per lb.   | 2½” hinge

**LITTLE NECKS** (or littlenecks) are the smallest commonly available size of east coast hard shell clam. They’re named after Little Neck Bay on New York’s Long Island, once an important clamming center. Littlenecks are the best choice for eating on the half-shell (raw) because they are tender, sweet and are great steamed, roasted or over pasta.

**MIDDLE NECKS** are the next size up and has the same applications at the little necks. This is the minimum size New York State allows to be harvested and sold within it’s boundaries.

**TOP NECKS** can meet the applications as noted and is perfect size for Clams Casino.

**CherrystoneS** are named after Cherrystone Creek on Virginia’s eastern shore. They’re a little larger than littlenecks and can be eaten raw, roasted, steamed, in chowder, or stuffed.

**ChowDers** clams are the largest size. The meat is tough, but they make flavorful chowder. They are usually chopped, minced, or diced for use in chowders, clam cakes, fritters, dips and spaghetti sauce.
CLAM SERVING SUGGESTION

CLAM, POTATO AND CHEDDAR CHEESE PIE

2 dozen Fresh Clams (Cherrystone, Middleneck, Littleneck or Topneck) 1 C onion, chopped
2-3 tbsp. butter 1 C celery, chopped
4 whole eggs 1 C biscuit mix
2 C milk
3 large potatoes, peeled and medium dice size
6-8 oz. cheddar cheese
Salt and pepper to taste

PREPARATION: Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Shuck clams, drain and coarsely chop. Dice potatoes and cook until tender but not over cooked. In large skillet add butter and sauté onions and celery until tender. In a large mixing bowl add the biscuit mix, eggs, milk, nutmeg, cheese, salt and pepper and blend well. Combine onions, celery, and chopped clams and mix well. Place clam mixture in bottom of well greased baking pie dish. Season with salt and pepper to desired taste. Pour biscuit batter over potatoes and clam mixture, covering fully. Bake in oven until golden brown, approximately 35-40 minutes. Yields 4-6 servings.

NOTE: When using smaller size clams keep whole and add more if desired.

ESTIMATED COST TO PRODUCE

$______________________________ PER PORTION

HARDSHELL CLAM NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Serving Size: 6 oz.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Per Serving</th>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>Calories From Fat 0</th>
<th>% Daily Value*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>81.82g</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Omega-3</td>
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</table>

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

OTHER CLAMS OF INTEREST:

MAHOGANY CLAMS Mahogany clams (Arctica Islandica) commonly known as the ocean quahog, is native to the North Atlantic Ocean. This species is also known by a number of different common names, including Icelandic cyprine, mahogany quahog, black quahog, and black clam. The shell of the ocean quahog is rounder and unlike the quahog, which lives intertidal and can be collected by clam digging, this species lives sub tidally, and can only be collected by dredging.

SOFTSHELL The softshell clam is also known as Manninose, piss clam, long-neck clam, steamer, fried clam, Ipswich clam, and belly clam. Its shell is so thin and brittle that you can easily snap it into pieces with your fingers. The entire clam is too big to fit inside its shell. The siphon (also called the snout or neck) hangs out. They’re called piss clams, because the siphon often sticks up through the sand, and when you walk by, they squirm you.

COCKLES Cockles are very similar to clams. Most of the cockles sold in the U.S. are flown in live from New Zealand. Cockles from New Zealand’s South Island are larger (15 per pound) than cockles from the North Island (20-25 per pound).

Why shellfish tags controls are so important:

Clams bought from a market should always be safe, as commercial harvesters are extremely careful about red tides. Filter-feeding shellfish – such as clams, oysters, and mussels – are affected. The toxin affects the human central nervous system.

Rastelli Seafood LLC, Egg Harbor City, NJ