

An examination of the protozoan parasite, *Perkinsus* sp. on the pearl oyster, *Pinctada fucata martensii* (Dunker) in the southern coast of Korea

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Pinctada fucata martensii, pearl oysters are distributed along the southern coast of Korea and they commercially cultured for pearl production. For pearl production, spats of the pearl oysters are often imported from Japan and raised in Tongyong area. Mass mortalities of the pearl oysters have been reported in Hiroshima are, Japan during 1996 and 1997. Although the agents responsible for the mortality is unclear, various organisms have been suspected as the agents, including a protozoan parasite, *Perkinsus*. This study investigate presence of *Perkinsus* like organism in the pearl oysters.

Infection with *Perkinsus* in pearl oysters, *Pinctada fucata martensii*, was investigated with Ray's fluid thioglycollate medium method and routine histological techniques. A total of 206 one and two year old pearl oysters were collected from pearl oyster farms in Tongyong, Korea during September and November, 1998. None of the pearl oysters examined with FTM and the histological method showed *Perkinsus* or *Perkinsus*-like organisms in their body. It is unlikely that pearl oysters are associated with *Perkinsus* or perkinsosis.