



order to travel through the ground to catch clams, you're going backwards, and that's a good thing. I like to do it at a very fast rate of speed. Most guys go slow."

To adjust his speed, particularly in the higher winds of March and April, King will sometimes use three anchors at a time. Other quahoggers prefer to drift without anchors, letting the wind and tide take the boat in one direction as they rake from the other side. They might haul up only a dozen times or they might haul up 50 times, depending on the catch and the weather. King says he can hear and feel what's getting into his basket, distinguishing the sounds of rocks, crabs and quahogs.

"It comes right up through the rake and the stales," he stressed. "It's a beautiful sound as it fills up. I get dollar signs in my eyes as my rake fills up."

Marmaras mentioned that the longer the rake, the harder it can be to work it, since the tide can pull on the lightweight aluminum stales and even pick them up out of the water.

"All of that pole is like a string that's flexible," he said. "If you have a strong tide, you have more 'whip' in it, and sometimes you need to put weights on the poles."

Once a basket is full, a motorized hauler on the boat will lift it into the boat. Then it's up to the quahogger to tip the basket onto a sorting table, where the clams that are too small fall through a grate and are tossed back. Crabs of all sizes, including the large, spiky horseshoe crabs, are frequent hitchhikers, and they must be pulled out of the catch.

King estimates that there are currently 120 full-time quahoggers and approximately 50 more who are part-timers. They are allowed to

bring in 12 bushels a day from unrestricted areas, though the limit is only three bushels from state management areas and those can only be dug on specified days of the week. A recording at the Department of Environmental Management keeps quahoggers abreast of any areas that have had to be closed due to heavy rains and sewage run-off.

## RECIPES

FROM THE KITCHEN OF DUFFY'S TAVERN  
courtesy of Captain Stu Tucker

### QUAHOG CHILI

Duffy's Tavern in North Kingstown is famous for its great seafood—and quahog chili, an innovation of Capt. Stu Tucker, the owner. Here's the formula according to Stu: In a large saucepan or pot, put in three tablespoons of oil. Chop up one green pepper and one onion and sauté for three minutes in oil. Add two cups of stewed tomatoes, one tablespoon of chili powder, and simmer until thick—about one hour.

Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add one pound of chopped fresh quahogs (or clams), two 16-oz. cans of red kidney beans (drained) and one 16-oz can of cannellini beans (drained). (Remember to save the shells for making wampum or for baked "stuffies.") Optional: add one pound of fresh sautéed tuna.

Simmer for thirty minutes. Serves six or more.

### MA TUCKER'S QUAHOG CHOWDER

*New England clam chowder traditionally includes milk, while degenerate New Yorkers (from a Yankee point of view) add tomatoes. Stu has won a number of prizes at New England chowder festivals with his mother's old original broth chowder, which uses neither milk nor tomatoes. This recipe helped feed the family during the great Depression. If you want to get a blue ribbon, you need to use fresh quahogs (not canned clam meat).*

16 cups of quahog juice	diced into 1/2 inch pieces
1/4 pound salt pork, chopped	2 cups chopped quahog meat
1/2 cup diced onions	1 Tbsp white pepper
8 pounds potatoes, peeled,	1 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce

Bring quahog juice to a simmer and let cool. Fry salt pork in kettle. When the fat is cooked out, remove the pork and save. Sauté onions in the pork fat, without browning. Add onions and potatoes to juice and simmer until tender. Add the salt pork, chopped quahog meat, seasonings and heat through.