

SCHEDULE 3

Production and placing on the market Conditions for fishery products

Chapter IV

Special Conditions for Handling Fishery Products on Shore

Section IV—

Conditions for processed products

1. Fresh, frozen and thawed products used for processing must comply with the requirements set out in Sections I, II or III of this Chapter.

2.—(1) Where the processing treatment is carried out to inhibit the development of pathogenic micro-organisms, or if it is a significant factor in the preservation of the product, the treatment must be a scientific process which produces safe food, or in the case of a treatment of products referred to in Parts II and III of Chapter I of Schedule 2 which have not been relayed or purified, such treatment must be a form of treatment mentioned in the Annex to Commission Decision [93/25/EEC](#) approving certain treatments to inhibit the development of pathogenic micro-organisms in bivalve molluscs and marine gastropods.

(2) The person responsible for an establishment must keep a register of the processing carried out. Depending on the type of process employed, details such as heating time and temperature, salt content, pH, water content, etc. must be monitored and controlled. Records must be kept at least for the expected storage life of the products and be available to the district council.

3. For products which are preserved for a limited period by a treatment such as salting, smoking, drying or marinading, the appropriate conditions for storage must be clearly marked on the packaging, in accordance with the Food Labelling Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996.

Canning

4. In the case of fishery products which have been subjected to sterilisation in hermetically sealed containers—

- (a) the water used for the preparation of cans must be potable water;
- (b) the process used for the heat treatment must be appropriate, having regard to such major criteria as the heating time, temperature, filling, size of containers etc., a record of which must be kept; the heat treatment must be capable of destroying or inactivating pathogenic organisms and the spores of pathogenic micro-organisms. The heating equipment must be fitted with devices for verifying whether the containers have in fact undergone appropriate heat treatment. Potable water must be used to cool containers after heat treatment, without prejudice to the presence of any chemical additives used in accordance with good technological practice to prevent corrosion of the equipment and containers;
- (c) further checks must be carried out at random by the manufacturer to ensure that the processed products have undergone appropriate heat treatment, namely—
 - incubation tests: incubation must be carried out at 37°C for seven days or at 35°C for ten days, or at any other equivalent combination;
 - microbiological examination of contents and containers in the establishment's laboratory or in such laboratory as the district council considers suitable;

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- (d) samples must be taken of production each day at predetermined intervals, to ensure the efficacy of sealing or of any other method of hermetic closure. For that purpose, appropriate equipment must be available for the examination of cross-sections of can-seams;
- (e) checks are carried out in order to ensure that containers are not damaged;
- (f) all containers which have undergone heat treatment under practically identical conditions must be given a batch identification mark, in accordance with the Food (Lot Marking) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996(1).

Smoking

5. Smoking must be carried out in separate premises or a special place equipped, if necessary, with a ventilation system to prevent smoke and heat from the combustion from affecting other premises or places where fishery products are prepared, processed or stored—

- (a) materials used to produce smoke for the smoking of fish must be stored away from the place of smoking and must be used in such a way that they do not contaminate the products;
- (b) materials used to produce smoke by burning wood that has been painted, varnished, glued or has undergone any chemical preservation treatment must be prohibited;
- (c) after smoking, products must be cooled rapidly to the temperature required for their preservation before being packaged.

Salting

6. As regards salting—

- (a) salting operations must take place in different premises and sufficiently removed from the premises where the other operations are carried out;
- (b) salt used in the treatment of fishery products must be clean and stored in such a way as to preclude contamination. It must not be reused;
- (c) any container used for salting or brining must be constructed in such a way as to preclude contamination during the salting or brining process;
- (d) containers or areas used for salting or brining must be cleaned before use.

Cooked crustacean and molluscan shellfish

7. Crustacean and molluscan shellfish must be cooked as follows—

- (a) any cooking must be followed by rapid cooling. Water used for this purpose must be potable water or clean seawater. If no other method of preservation is used, cooling must continue until the temperature approaching that of melting ice is reached;
- (b) shelling or shucking must be carried out under hygienic conditions avoiding the contamination of the product. Where such operations are done by hand, workers must pay particular attention to the washing of their hands and all working surfaces must be cleaned thoroughly. If machines are used, they must be cleaned at frequent intervals and disinfected after each working day. After shelling or shucking, cooked products must immediately be frozen or kept chilled at a temperature which will preclude the growth of pathogens, and be stored in appropriate premises;
- (c) every manufacturer must carry out microbiological checks at regular intervals, complying with the standards and other obligations set out in Commission Decision [93/51/EEC](#) on the

(1) [S.R. 1996 No. 384](#)

microbiological criteria applicable to the production of cooked crustaceans and molluscan shellfish, but for the purposes of that Commission Decision—

- (i) the reference in article 3(1) to the requirements of article 6 to the Council Directive shall be treated as if it were a reference to regulation 28, and
- (ii) the reference in the first indented paragraph of article 3(2) to competent authorities shall be treated as a reference to the district council which approved the establishment in question.

Mechanically recovered fish flesh

- 8. The mechanical recovery of fish flesh must be carried out under the following conditions—
 - (a) mechanical recovery of gutted fish must take place without due delay after filleting, using raw materials free of guts. Where whole fish are used, they must be gutted and washed beforehand;
 - (b) the machinery must be cleaned at frequent intervals and at least every two hours;
 - (c) after recovery, mechanically recovered flesh must be frozen as quickly as possible or incorporated in a product intended for freezing or stabilising treatment.