

## **STANDARD 2.2.3**

### **FISH AND FISH PRODUCTS**

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#### **Purpose**

This Standard defines the term ‘fish’ and provides a compositional standard specific to histamine in fish and fish products. This Standard also requires the provision of certain cooking instructions for raw fish which has been joined using a binding system without the application of heat.

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#### **Clauses**

- 1 Interpretation

In this Code -

**fish** means any of the cold-blooded aquatic vertebrates and aquatic invertebrates including shellfish, but does not include amphibians and reptiles.

#### **Editorial note:**

This Standard does not define specific names for fish.

In Australia, guidance on the specific naming of fish may be found in the Australian Fish Names List, as amended from time to time, which is available from the Seafood Services Australia website at [www.seafoodservices.com.au](http://www.seafoodservices.com.au) or by contacting Seafood Services Australia on 1300 130 321.

In New Zealand, guidance may be found in the following publications:

- (1) clause 32 of the Animal Products (Specifications for Products Intended for Human Consumption) Notice 2000; and
- (2) the *Authorised Fish Names Circular* (1995) issued by the New Zealand Fishing Industry Agreed Implementation Standards pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Fish Export Processing Regulations 1995; and
- (3) the Commerce Commission’s booklet titled *Food Labelling, Promotion and Marketing - A Guide for Manufacturers, Importers and Retailers* (1998).

## **2 Composition**

The level of histamine in fish or fish products must not exceed 200 mg/kg.

### 3 Labelling etc of formed or joined fish

Where raw fish has been formed or joined in the semblance of a cut or fillet of fish using a binding system without the application of heat, whether coated or not, a declaration that the fish is either formed or joined, in conjunction with cooking instructions indicating how the microbiological safety of the product can be achieved –

- (a) must be included on the label on the package of the fish; or
- (b) if the food is not required to be labelled, must be provided to the purchaser.

#### **Editorial Note:**

Circumstances in which food is not required to be labelled are set out in Standard 1.2.1.

The Codex Alimentarius Standards for fish provide histamine levels as indicators for -

1. Decomposition; and
2. Hygiene and handling.

For decomposition, the relevant Standards state -

‘The products shall not contain more than 10 mg/100 g of histamine based on the average of the sample unit tested. This applies only to species of *Clupeidae*, *Scrombridae*, *Scrombresocidae*, *Pomatomidae* and *Coryphaenidae* families.’

For hygiene and handling, the relevant Standards state -

‘No sample unit shall contain histamine that exceeds 20 mg per 100 g . This applies only to species of the families Scrombridae, Clupeidae, Coryphaenidae, Scrombresocidae and Pomatomidae .’

These Codex Standards cover -

- (a) quick frozen fish fillets;
- (b) quick frozen blocks of fish fillet, minced fish flesh and mixtures of fillets and minced fish flesh;
- (c) eviscerated and uneviscerated quick frozen finfish;
- (d) quick frozen fish sticks (fish fingers), fish portions and fish fillets - breaded or battered;
- (e) canned sardines and sardine type products; and
- (f) canned tuna and bonito.