

Decree on Fish and Fish Products

108/1993

Issued in Helsinki on 25 January 1993

Section 1 – Scope of application

- (1) This Decree covers the handling, processing, preparation, classification, packaging, transport, keeping, storage, import and sale of fish and fish products which are to be sold as food.
- (2) What in this Decree is said about fish shall, to applicable extent, apply to crustaceans, molluscs and similar aquatic produce of the animal kingdom fit for human consumption.
- (3) The Decree shall apply to foodstuffs referred to in subsections (1) and (2) of this section even when frozen or deep frozen.
- (4) Besides the provisions of this Decree, those of the Fisheries Act (286/1982) and the Public Health Administration Act (469/1965) shall be followed.

Section 2 – Definitions

For the purposes of this Decree,

- (1) *fish* means natural or cultivated, fresh and either chilled or deep frozen fish or part of fish which are, either as such or after cleaning or other kind of preliminary processing, put up for sale to consumers, mass caterers or food industry;
- (2) *fish product* means fish or any part of fish which has been prepared for consumption by salting, smoking, roasting on embers, or by some other means and for the preparation of which no other ingredients have been used to any significant extent;
- (3) *cleaning* means the gutting of and, where appropriate, the removal of the scales, kidneys and gills from fish and the washing of the fish.

Section 3 – Handling of fish after it has been caught and taken up

Fish shall, during and after capture and the taking up, be handled in such a way as not to impair its quality through negligence.

Section 4 – Bleeding and cleaning

The following species shall be cleaned in accordance with fair handling and processing practices and without undue delays after the capture and taking up of

the fish: salmon (*Salmo salar*), rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), sea trout (*Salmo trutta m. trutta*), brown trout (*Salmo trutta m. lacustris*), flounder (*Platichthys flesus*), char (*Salvelinus alpinus*), lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*), brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) and, provided these weigh more than 500 grams, whitefish (*Coregonus lavaretus*) and peled whitefish (*Coregonus peled*). From cod (*Gadus morhua*), the blood shall be let off directly upon capture.

Section 5 – **Chilling of fish**

After capture, taking up, bleeding and/or cleaning, the fish shall, unless otherwise provided elsewhere in law, be chilled without delay down to 0...+3 degrees Centigrade.

Section 6 – *Keeping, transport and sale of fish*

- (1) Fish shall be kept, transported, stored and sold in appropriate, clean cases or other containers. Lots caught or taken up within different days shall not be mixed together.
- (2) The temperature of fish shall be held, by using ice or otherwise, at 0...+3 degrees Centigrade.

Section 7 – *Quality of fish*

Fish intended for sale or for preparing a fish product therefrom shall be fresh, healthy and of impeccable quality. It shall not present any signs of deterioration nor otherwise have any extraneous odour or taste. Fish shall not bear or contain parasites impairing its quality or appearance nor shall it present any alterations caused by parasites. Fish shall not show any injuries, bad deformations or external anomalies.

Section 8 – *Quality of a fish product*

Fish products may be prepared from frozen or deep frozen fish if the fish is of impeccable quality. The Ministry of Trade and Industry shall, where appropriate, issue specific regulations about the preparation, composition or quality of fish products.

Section 9 – *Classification of fish*

Regarding fish to be put up for sale classified by its size or its freshness degree and other quality aspects, the regulations made by the Ministry of Trade and Industry as to the relevant criteria shall apply.

Section 10 – *Sale of classified fish*

Should fish classified by its freshness degree undergo qualitative changes during transport, keeping or sale, the economic operator shall alter the class indications to represent the true quality of the fish, or remove the indications altogether where called for. Fish may - in such a case - be sold unclassified if it fulfils the quality criteria laid down in section 7.

Section 11 – *Labelling regarding fish*

- (1) Besides the labelling prescribed in the Decree on Food Labelling (794/1991), the transport case or container shall show for the fish, if it is to be put up for sale classified, its category by weight or quality. For natural fish, the fishing grounds and the date of capture shall be given legibly on the transport case or container.
- (2) When fish is to be sold to the consumer, the information required under subsection (1) shall be provided on the case or other container of sale or in a poster placed in its immediate vicinity.
- (3) For fish to be sold to food industry the information required under subsection (1) shall be provided in the commercial documents relating to the lot of capture concerned.

Section 12 – *Indication of the origin of a fish product*

If imported fish have been used for the preparation of a fish product in Finland and if the lack of information could mislead the purchaser, the country or region of origin of the fish shall, when the product is sold, be indicated in the labelling or by some other means.

Section 13 – *Penal provisions*

Anybody infringing this Decree or any regulations made hereunder shall be liable to punishment according to the Food Act (526/1941).

Section 14 – *Miscellaneous provisions*

Further provisions on the implementation of this Decree will be issued by the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Section 15 – *Entry into force*

- (1) This Decree enters into force on 1 September 1993.
- (2) This Decree repeals the Decree on Fish Put Up for Sale (443/1968), as amended.
- (3) Measures necessary for the implementation of this Decree may be undertaken before the Decree's entry into force.