codex alimentarius commission

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

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Agenda Item 11 **CX/FFP 00/11**

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS
Twenty-fourth Session
Ålesund, Norway, 5-9 June 2000

DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STANDARD FOR SCALLOPS (Prepared by Canada)

Discussion Paper on the Need to Develop a Codex Standard for Scallop Adductor Muscle Meat

Background:

1. At the twenty-second Session (May, 1996) of the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP)[1], the Delegation of Canada introduced a document titled, "*Discussion Paper on the Need to Develop New Codex Standards for Fish and Fishery Products*[2]." Based on the analysis of the 1992 trade statistics data obtained from FAO's International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishery Commodities (ISSCFC), a recommendation was made to the CCFFP to consider the elaboration of Codex standards for ten different fish and fishery products because of their significance in international trade. Among the ten products listed, frozen scallop meat was suggested for standardization. The summary indicated that the net weight of frozen scallop meat traded between countries in 1992 were, for import, 29,141 metric tons (MT) and for export, 31,397 MT. Additionally, the number of countries engaged in the import and export of frozen scallop meat was 45 and 38 respectively. The CCFFP agreed to give priority to those products for which codes of practice were being revised and that the determination for the need to develop new standards will be based on the Committee's workload.

2. At the twenty-third Session (June, 1998) of the CCFFP[3], the Committee accepted the proposal from the Delegation of Canada to prepare a discussion paper regarding the development of a standard for scallops and to address the specificity of this product, while agreeing to discuss the matter with the Delegation of the Netherlands who are in the process of preparing a standard for bivalve molluscs.

3. A review and comparison of FAO trade statistics[4] between 1992 and 1996, suggests a trend towards an increase in the net weight being traded and the total number of countries involved in import and export of frozen or prepared scallops. The data are summarized in Table 1 and demonstrates the continued importance of this product in international trade.

4. Canada and the Netherlands share the view that a standard for scallop adductor muscle meat should apply to scallop adductor muscle meat in which the shell, viscera and roe have been removed, and that the Proposed Draft Standard for Bivalve Molluscs would cover whole scallops (in the shell) as well as scallop adductor meat with viscera and roe attached.

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1 Alinorm 97/18, Para 80

2 CX/FFP 12 CRD 11 (Canada)

3 Alinorm 99/18, Para 105

4 FAO Fishcomm PC software containing a fishery statistical database (1976 - 1996) and data using FAO's International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishery Commodities (ISSCFC) maintained by FAO Fisheries Information, Data and Statistics unit (FIDI)

Points to Consider in the Development of a Codex Standard for Scallop Adductor Muscle Meat:

5. When developing a standard for scallop adductor muscle meat (with viscera and roe removed), the CCFFP should take into consideration the following specific issues concerning its production that differs from bivalve molluscs.

5.1 Marine biotoxins
5.2 Sodium tripolyphosphate as a food additive
5.3 Moisture content
5.4 Protein (fibrinogen) bound scallops

5.1 Control of ***marine biotoxins*** is an important element in ensuring the safety of bivalve molluscan shellfish. For scallops, the risk of Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP), Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning (ASP) and Diarrhetic Shellfish Poisoning (DSP) is increased if the scallop meat is consumed with viscera and roe attached. However, studies have generally shown that marine biotoxins are not present in scallop adductor muscle meat alone and therefore do not pose a health hazard. Since the CCFFP is in the process of deliberating a proposed draft standard which will discuss the hygienic requirements for the production of bivalve molluscs, a separate standard for scallop adductor muscle meat can address other aspects which are important in the international trade of this product.

5.2 The CCFFP should discuss current practices involving the use of ***sodium tripolyphosphate*** as it relates to the "Food Additives" section of the standard. Sodium tripolyphosphate serves a beneficial purpose such as the adjustment of pH and sequestering metallic elements in certain foods to alter deleterious process-related chemical reactions. Its application to the adductor muscle meat of scallops coupled with fresh water, results in an increase in its moisture content. Sodium tripolyphosphate is not known to contribute to the nutritional value or quality of the product. In discussing this matter, the Committee should closely examine the use of this additive and its function in the production of scallop adductor muscle meat.

5.3 Post-harvest holding practices can have significant and predictable effects on the ***moisture content*** of scallop adductor muscle meat. Increased moisture content can be expected during any period of time when scallop meats are subjected to ice melt or fresh water contact. Studies have been carried out to determine the natural moisture content of scallop adductor muscle meat and countries have established tolerances based on this information in order to limit the excessive addition of water to this product. Excessive moisture content in scallop adductor muscle meat may be an indication of unacceptable handling/processing practices. The CCFFP may wish to consider the inclusion of a maximum moisture content for scallop adductor muscle meats in the proposed standard.

5.4 A scallop product emerging in international trade is ***protein bound scallops*** which are typically made from pieces of scallop meat or smaller sized scallop adductor muscle meat bound by fibrinogen, a natural protein binder. Once formed, the finished product closely resemble a bigger whole scallop meat. Some protein binders used to bind scallops are derived from animal origin which, in the absence of adequate labelling, could misinform those consumers who have special dietary preferences. Since protein bound scallops are products of further processing, it differs somewhat from the common scallop meat form. In developing this standard, the CCFFP would have an opportunity to provide guidance on whether protein bound scallops would be covered by the scope.

6. The CCFFP should consider what information should be included in the product definition section of the standard, such as the names of commercial species for inclusion in the standard, and nomenclature in the case of certain species which are marketed and labelled according to the law and custom of the country in which the product is sold. The CCFFP should also consider whether the standard should include scallop adductor muscle meat marketed in both the fresh and quick frozen forms since the same issues apply to both product types. This approach of including the fresh and quick frozen forms in the scallop standard would allow for greater practical application.

Conclusion:

7. The Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products at its twenty-forth Session (June 5 to 9, 2000) will have an opportunity to discuss the commencement of this new work and where agreed, recommend to the Executive Committee that work be started on the development of a standard for scallop adductor muscle meat.

TABLE 1

A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE NUMBER OF IMPORTING AND EXPORTING COUNTRIES AND NET WEIGHT INVOLVED IN THE TRADE OF FROZEN SCALLOP MEAT DURING 1992 AND 1996

	Net Weight (Metric Tons)		Number of Countries	
Year	**Exports***	**Imports***	**Exporters**	**Importers**
1992	31,397	29,141	38	45
1996	47,660	50,684	40	69

* Differences between figures for total exports and total imports may be due to several factors including, but not limited to:

- the lag time between the dispatch of goods from the exporting country and their arrival in the importing country;
- the use of different tariff classifications for the same product by countries.