

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS

INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS



Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations



World Health
Organization

E-mail: codex@fao.org - www.codexalimentarius.org

STANDARD FOR DRIED SHARK FINS

CXS 189-1993

Adopted in 1993. Amended in 2024 and 2025.

2025 Amendment

A reference in Section 5.3 to the *Code of practice for fresh fish* (CXC 9-1976) was replaced with the *Code of practice for fish and fishery products* (CXC 52-2003). In 2003 at CAC26 the Commission agreed the *Code of practice for fish and fishery products* (CXC 52-2003) would replace the previously existing individual codes.

2024 Amendment

Following decisions taken at the Forty-seventh Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in November 2024, amendments were made in Section 6.2 Labelling of non-retail containers by replacing the text with a reference to the *General standard for the labelling of non-retail containers of foods* (CXS 346-2021); and Section 7 Sampling, examination and analyses was amended by replacing methods of analysis with a reference to the *Recommended methods of analysis and sampling* (CXS 234-1999).

1. SCOPE

This standard applies to dried shark fins intended for further processing.

2. DESCRIPTION

2.1 Product definition

Dried shark fins are the dorsal and pectoral fins cut in the form of an arc and the lower lobe of the caudal fin cut straight, from which all flesh has been removed, and are cut from species of sharks which are safe for human consumption.

2.2 Process definition

The fins shall be subjected to a drying process so as to meet the requirements of Section 3.3.4 and shall comply with the conditions laid down hereafter.

2.3 Presentation

2.3.1 Dried shark fins may be presented with the skin on or as skinless.

2.3.2 *Other forms of presentation*

Any other presentation shall be permitted, provided that it:

- meets all other requirements of this standard; and
- is adequately described on the label to avoid confusing or misleading the consumer.

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1 Shark

Dried shark fins shall be prepared from sound sharks which are of a quality fit to be sold fresh for human consumption.

3.2 Other ingredients

None.

3.3 Final product

3.3.1 *Appearance*

The final product shall be free from foreign material.

3.3.2 *Odour*

The product shall be free from objectionable odours.

3.3.3 *Texture*

The dried shark fins shall be free from objectionable textural characteristics.

3.3.4 *Percentage of moisture*

The final product shall have a moisture content not exceeding 18 percent.

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

No additives are permitted.

5. HYGIENE AND HANDLING

5.1 The final product shall be free from any foreign material that poses a threat to human health.

5.2 When tested by appropriate methods of sampling and examination prescribed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), the product:

- shall be free from microorganisms or substances originating from microorganisms in amounts which may present a hazard to health in accordance with standards established by the CAC; and
- shall not contain any other substance in amounts which may present a hazard to health in accordance with standards established by the CAC.

5.3 It is recommended that the product covered by the provisions of this standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the *General principles of food hygiene* (CXC 1-1969)¹ and the *Code of practice for fish and fishery products* (CXC 52-2003).²

6. LABELLING

In addition to the *General standard for the labelling of pre-packaged foods* (CXS 1-1985),³ the following specific provisions shall apply:

6.1 Name of the food

The name of the product shall be "dried shark fins" or any other appropriate name in accordance with the law and custom of the country in which the product is to be distributed.

There shall appear on the label reference to the form of presentation in close proximity to the name of the product in such descriptive terms that will adequately and fully describe the nature of the presentation of the product to avoid misleading or confusing the consumer.

In addition to the specified labelling designations above, the name of the species, the type of fin and its size shall also appear on the label.

6.2 Labelling of non-retail containers

The labelling of non-retail containers should be in accordance with the *General standard for the labelling of non-retail containers of foods* (CXS 346-2021).⁴

7. SAMPLING, EXAMINATION AND ANALYSIS

7.1 Sampling

- Sampling of lots for examination of the product shall be in accordance with an appropriate sampling plan with an AQL of 6.5.
- The sampling of lots for examination of net weight shall be carried out according to the Codex sampling plans for the determination of net weight (under elaboration).

7.2 Examination

7.2.1 Sensory and physical examination

Samples taken for sensory and physical examination shall be assessed by persons trained in such examination and in accordance with the procedures set out in Annex B – Sensory and physical examination, the *Recommended methods of analysis and sampling* (CXS 234-1999)⁵ and the *Guidelines for the sensory evaluation of fish and shellfish in laboratories* (CXG 31-1999).⁶

7.3 Analysis

For checking the compliance with this standard, the methods of analysis and sampling contained in the *Recommended methods of analysis and sampling* (CXS 234-1999) relevant to the provisions in this standard shall be used.

7.3.1 Determination of moisture

[Method to be developed].

8. CLASSIFICATION OF DEFECTIVES

A sample unit shall be considered defective when it fails to meet any of the following final product requirements referred to in Section 3.3.

8.1 Foreign matter

The presence in the sample unit of any matter which has not been derived from fish, does not pose a threat to human health, and is readily recognized without magnification or is present at a level determined by any method including magnification that indicates non-compliance with good manufacturing and sanitation practices.

8.2 Odour

A sample unit affected by persistent and distinct objectionable odours indicative of decomposition.

8.3 Texture

Textural breakdown of the fin, indicative of decomposition, characterized by softness.

8.4 Moisture

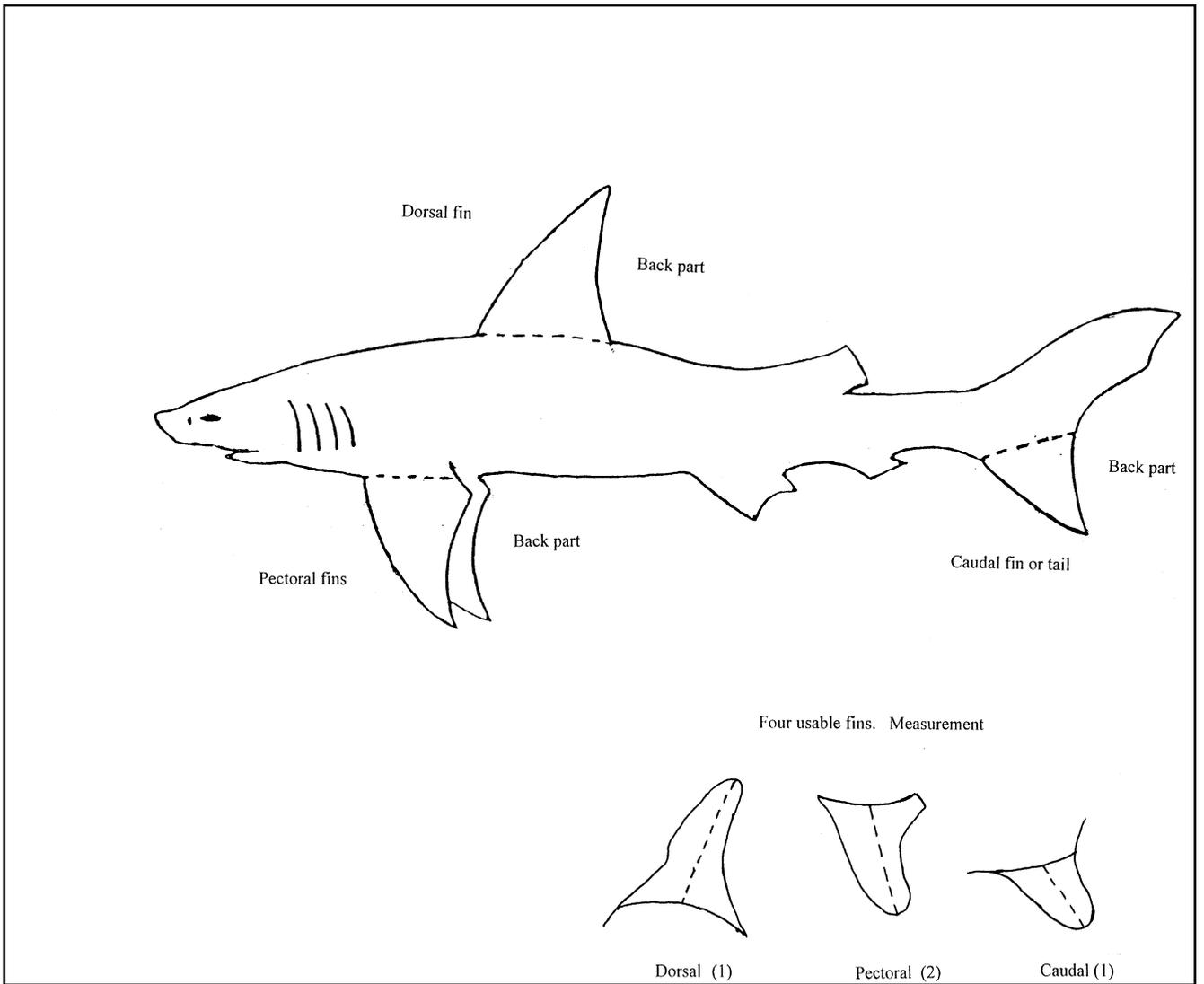
The sample unit exceeds 18 percent moisture.

9. LOT ACCEPTANCE

A lot shall be considered as meeting the requirements of this standard when:

- the total number of defectives as classified according to Section 8 does not exceed the acceptance number (c) of an appropriate sampling plan with an AQL of 6.5;
- the average net weight of all sample units is not less than the declared weight, provided there is no unreasonable shortage in any container;
- the total number of sample units not meeting the form of presentation as defined in Section 2.3 does not exceed the acceptance number (c) of an appropriate sampling plan with an AQL of 6.5; and
- the food additive, hygiene and handling, and labelling requirements of Sections 4, 5 and 6 are met.

ANNEX A



ANNEX B – Sensory and physical examination

To be developed.

NOTES

¹ FAO and WHO. 1969. *General principles of food hygiene*. Codex Alimentarius Code of Practice, No. CXC 1-1969. Codex Alimentarius Commission. Rome.

² FAO and WHO. 2003. *Code of practice for fish and fishery products*. Codex Alimentarius Code of Practice, No. CXC 52-2003. Codex Alimentarius Commission. Rome.

³ FAO and WHO. 1985. *General standard for the labelling of pre-packaged foods*. Codex Alimentarius Standard, No. CXS 1-1985. Codex Alimentarius Commission. Rome.

⁴ FAO and WHO. 2021. *General standard for the labelling of non-retail containers of foods*. Codex Alimentarius Standard, No. CXS 346-2021. Codex Alimentarius Commission. Rome.

⁵ FAO and WHO. 1999. *Recommended methods of analysis and sampling*. Codex Alimentarius Standard, No. CXS 234-1999. Codex Alimentarius Commission. Rome.

⁶ FAO and WHO. 1999. *Guidelines for the sensory evaluation of fish and shellfish in laboratories*. Codex Alimentarius Guideline, No. CXG 31-1999. Codex Alimentarius Commission. Rome.