

Processing and Packaging Your Catch for your Consumption



VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
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Processing and packaging your seafood may require a license

- If you are selling the product to others: Farmers Market, Retail level, or restaurants you are required to have a license to so and training.
- If processing and packaging your seafood for your own consumption, then you **don't** need to apply and obtain a State License

Processing and packaging seafood for your consumption

- Keep it Cold
- Keep it Clean!- hands, work area, utensils
- Keep it Separated
- Cook it properly

Keep it Cold

- Chill and Kill fish quickly
- Maintain fish in ice during and throughout cutting and dressing
- Use coolers, plastic containers with ice
- Store with ice in coldest part of refrigerator to preserve quality



Keep it Clean

- Process fish in a clean area
- Process in cleaned and sanitized equipment
- Use equipment that is cleanable
- Approved for food applications



Dressing fish at home. Photo provided by Virginia Sea Grant

Keep it Separated

- Away from other raw and cooked product
- Always follow good hygiene practices



Photo by Aileen Devlin Virginia Sea Grant

Packaging and Storing Fish

Refrigerated with ice

- Rinse fish before packaging
- Wrap in in plastic wrap, then overwrap with aluminum foil;
- Label with content and date
- Store with ice in coldest part of refrigerator
- Use fish within 2-3 days



Seafood Storage Guide			PURCHASED:		
			Frozen/ Kept Frozen	Fresh/ Frozen at Home	Fresh or Thawed/ Kept Refrigerated
Fish Fillets/ Steaks	Lean	Cod, Flounder	10-12 months	6-8 months	36 hours
		Haddock, Halibut			
		Pollock, Ocean Perch			
	Fat	Sea Trout, Rockfish	8-9 months	4 months	36 hours
		Pacific Ocean Perch			
		Mullet, Smelt			
		Salmon (cleaned)			
Shellfish	Dungeness Crab	6 months	6 months	5 days	
	Snow Crab	6 months	6 months	5 days	
	Blue Crab Meat (fresh)	N/A	4 months	3-5 days	
	Blue Crab Meat (pasteurized)	N/A	N/A	6 months	
	Cocktail Claws	N/A	4 months	5 days	
	King Crab	12 months	9 months	7 days	
	Surimi Seafoods	10-12 months	9 months	2 weeks	
	Shrimp	9 months	5 months	4 days	
	Oysters (shucked)	N/A	N/A	4-7 days	
	Clams (shucked)	N/A	N/A	5 days	

Packaging and Storing Fish

Storing Fish Frozen

- Use close-fitting, moisture–proof food bags or freezer bags
- Freeze fish quickly by placing it in single layer in freezer
- Can keep to 6-12 months
- Defrost overnight in the refrigerator a day before consuming
- Once thaw, use within 36 to 48 hrs.

Packaging and Storing Fish

Vacuum-Packed Fish

- Freeze fish quickly by placing it in single layer in freezer overnight;
- Place frozen portions in suitable quality vacuum bags and vacuum seal;
- Defrosting vacuum pack fish:
 - Remove it from package,
 - Cover or wrap, and,
 - Thaw under refrigeration.



Cook it

Cooking Fish For Safety

- 145° F
- 165 F Stuffed Products

10-Minute Rule

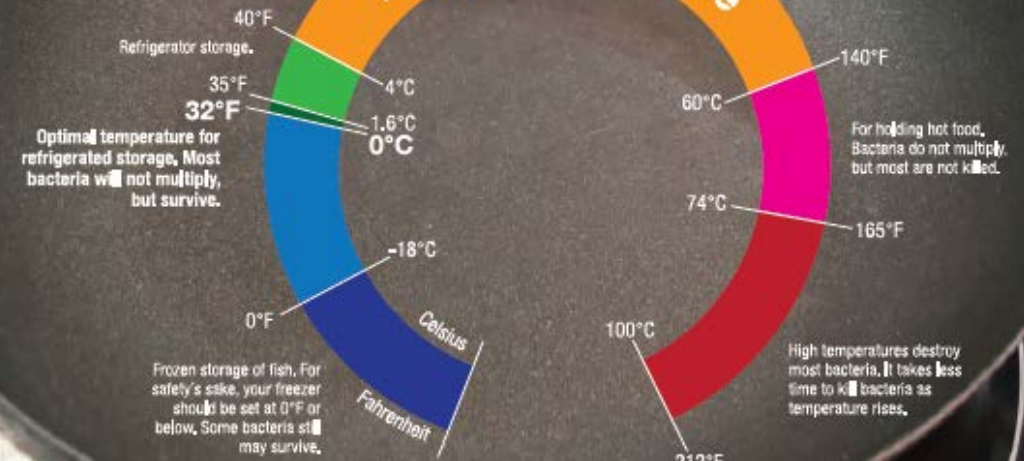
The "10-Minute Rule" is a good guide when cooking seafood. It applies to baking, broiling, steaming, poaching, and barbecuing.

1. Measure the fillet or steak at its thickest point. If the fish is stuffed or rolled, measure it after stuffing or rolling.
2. Cook for 10 minutes per inch, at 400°–450°F, turning the fish halfway through the cooking time. For example, a 1-inch fish steak should be cooked five minutes on each side for a total of 10 minutes. Pieces of fish less than 1/2-inch thick do not have to be turned over.
3. Add five minutes to the total cooking time if you are cooking the fish in foil or if the fish is cooked in a sauce.
4. Double the cooking time for frozen fish that has not been defrosted.

Safe Temperatures for Seafood

When storing and preparing seafood, keep it at the proper temperature to maintain its safety and quality. This illustration highlights some of the most important temperatures.

Bacteria multiply rapidly; therefore, foods should pass through the danger zone as rapidly as possible. Keep fish out of this temperature range.



A Consumer Guide to Safe Seafood Handling



by Doris Hicks

All the good news about seafood — the health and nutritional benefits, the wide varieties and flavors — has had a positive effect on consumption: people are eating more seafood. Yet consumers want to be assured that seafood is as safe or safer to eat than other foods.

When you hear “seafood safety,” think of a safety net designed to protect you, the consumer, from food-borne illness. Every facet of the seafood industry, from harvester to consumer, plays a role in holding up the safety net.

The role of state and federal agencies, fishermen,

This bulletin will give you the information you need to educate yourself and be assured that the fish and shellfish you consume are safe. The most common food-borne illnesses are caused by a combination of bacteria naturally present in our environment and food handling errors made in commercial settings, food service institutions, or at home

Information for this presentation was taken in part from
A consumer guide to safe seafood handling, by Doris Hicks
Sea Gant Delaware



Thank You