

THE FISH INSPECTOR

A Newsletter on Seafood Inspection, Quality Control and Technology



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GLOBAL



IAFI confirms WSC 2025 venue and dates

A meeting of the International Association of Fish Inspectors (IAFI) Executive Board Members was held at the Seafish Stand during Seafood Expo Global (SEG), Barcelona on 25 April 2024. The meeting was attended by IAFI executive members in person and remotely. The board was informed of the outcome of the previous World Seafood Congress (WSC 2023) which held in September 2023 at Peniche, Portugal. The congress was attended by 150 participants, from over 40 different countries. The event was well supported with the participation of FAO, UNIDO, and Worldfish, as well as sponsorship from Thai Union and Docapesca. The four days event included the technical presentations, developing country workshops and sessions on the Global Seafood Supply Chain, Advances in Safety, Science, Technology, and Utilisation of Aquatic Products, Traceability for Food Safety and; Sustainability in Fishery and Aquaculture Products, Marine Biotoxins, Food Safety Hazards and Risks in Fishery and Aquaculture Products, Challenges in Seafood Regulation, Inspection, and Control. The Conference was also attended by the IAFI sponsored 2023 Peter Howgate Award winner, Polina Rusanova (Russian national, studying PhD in Italy). The Board discussed about the arrangements for the forthcoming WSC 2025 and confirmed the venue as Chennai, India and the dates as 21-23 September 2025. The Board also appointed Dr. Heather Burke, Fisheries and Marine Institute, Newfoundland as a new Member.

Source: IAFI.

World Food Safety Day 2024

This year World Food Safety Day (7 June) celebrated with the theme "Food safety: prepare for the unexpected," which coincides with the 20th anniversary of the FAO/WHO International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN). INFOSAN was established following the development and adoption of the Codex Principles and Guidelines for the Exchange of Information in Food Safety Emergency Situations (CXG 19-1995), which was the genesis of INFOSAN in terms of designation of emergency contact points at the national level. These guidelines were subsequently revised to include reference to the INFOSAN network. The World Food Safety Day theme gives us an opportunity to acknowledge that even when the unexpected happens, from natural disasters to a power outage, there are ways we can ensure our food is safe. Understanding how food becomes unsafe and ensuring good communication and emergency planning all play into preparing for the unexpected, whether you work as part of a food safety authority or a food business, or if you are a consumer. The Codex Alimentarius has prepared a case study that demonstrates how these factors helped resolve a food safety incident that initiated in Honduras and affected people across the world. The facilitation of information sharing by INFOSAN, and the use of Codex texts were key to the successful conclusion to this story, which offers a number of lessons learned. Download the Codex Case Study: [here](#).

Access social media assets and lots more: [here](#).

Invitation to Launch Webinar: Bivalve Mollusc Sanitation for Growing Areas on 11 July 2024, from 14:00 to 15:00 (Rome time)

This international technical webinar, organised by the [FAO elearning Academy](#) in collaboration with the United Kingdom Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), to share experiences and lessons learnt, discuss challenges, and propose innovative solutions and models. The focus of the



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IAFI

Professionals
for a Safe and
Sustainable Global
Seafood Supply

series is the primary production of bivalve molluscs for consumption as live or raw bivalves and, in particular, how to manage microbiological hazards at this stage. The series consists of the following four e-learning courses:

1. Bivalve mollusc sanitation: Growing area risk profile
2. Bivalve mollusc sanitation: Growing area assessment and review
3. Bivalve mollusc sanitation: Growing area monitoring
4. Bivalve mollusc sanitation: Growing area classification and management

[FAST REGISTRATION HERE.](#)

New tool developed for food fraud risk assessment

A new tool named 'Food Fraud Score Card' has been developed by Integrity Compliance Solution (ICS) experts and their contractors. It was based on a food fraud risk assessment method developed by ICS staff member Clare Winkel in 2016. Ms. Clare is an International Food Standard Expert and Trainer by profession. She is also an Executive Committee member at the International Association of Fish Inspectors (IAFI). IAFI exists to promote exchange of ideas and information, foster interaction, understanding and professional collaboration among individuals, organisations, and governments, disseminate knowledge about fish, seafood, and associated products inspection, and promote advancement of the state-of-the-art in fish inspection research and education. This robust system not only simplifies the initial assessment process but also offers significant advantages for ongoing compliance, consistency and risk management. This method has been used by companies in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, USA, Trinidad, Jamaica and a number of South Pacific countries across many industry sectors. Click [here](#) to get a step-by-step video tutorial and to know how 'Food Fraud Score Card' works.

ASIA PACIFIC NEWS

Australia: New Seafood Handling Guidelines

Sydney Fish Market (SFM) is Australia's seafood center of excellence and strives for the highest levels of quality and customer satisfaction. All suppliers to SFM are required to comply with the Seafood Handling Guidelines. These guidelines are a clear representation of not only the key methods of storage and handling of seafood, but what buyers value when purchasing a product through the Market. By consistently following the practices suggested in this manual, suppliers can ensure correct size grading, improved freshness, and longer shelf life for their seafood, allowing them to command premium prices in the marketplace. Buyers can also use this guide to understand quality standards, regulations, handling and storage requirements.

[Download the New Seafood Handling Guidelines.](#)

Bangladesh: DG Sante report emphasises on effective control measures

DG SANTÉ of the European Commission published a report on a December 2023 audit of the sanitary controls in Bangladesh on fishery products intended to be exported to the EU. The audit found that the system is effectively implemented with a high frequency of controls and official sampling and analyses. Effective control measures provided a high-level assurance regarding the traceability from farm to export. However, the limits for certain microbiological and chemical contaminants were not aligned with EU rules (although the risk is mitigated by the fact that no exceedances above EU limits were detected). Furthermore, the official control of fishery products did not cover all relevant parameters and in particular, PCBs in wild caught fish. The Competent Authority, the Department of Fisheries, was requested to guarantee implementation of a corrective action plan.

Source: Megapesca Lda Fish Files Lite Newsletter, www.megapesca.com, May 2024

The Philippines: BFAR warns about PSP and TRT outbreak

Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resource (BFAR) of the Philippines warn consumers that shellfishes collected and tested from coastal waters of Dauis and Tagbilaran City in Bohol; Dumanquillas Bay in Zamboanga del Sur; coastal waters of San Benito in Surigao del Norte are still positive for Paralytic Shellfish Poison (PSP) or Toxic Red Tide (TRT) that is beyond regulatory limit. All types of shellfish and *Acetes* sp. gathered from the areas mentioned before are NOT SAFE for human consumption. Fish, squids, shrimps, and crabs are safe for human consumption provided that they are fresh and washed thoroughly, and internal organs such as gills and intestines are removed before cooking. Find out the press release: [here](#).

Kiribati: Women taking the 'big responsibility of fish export for a small stature'

Joana Rabaua is one of the six women forming the backbone and taking big responsibility of fish export industry of the small stature. This tiny Pacific Island nation has become the latest to enter the European Union market. The pressure is relentless, and days stretch into a blur of inspections processing facilities, hulking fishing vessels docked at port. Every shipment, every fish, must meet rigorous EU quality standards. One misstep could jeopardise the country's hard-won access. Rabaua's route to being a verification officer was unconventional. Starting in coastal fisheries, she found her calling in the regulatory sphere. She acknowledges the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) for the training the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) program funded by the EU and the

Government of Sweden through the Pacific European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) Programme, for bolstering their expertise. Joanna embodies the changing face of the Pacific fisheries sector. Her determination, and that of her colleagues, isn't just about Kiribati's bottom line it's about proving that women can excel in this traditionally male-dominated arena. Read the full article: [here](#).

Malaysia: DOF imposes ban on bivalve consumption

Effective immediately, the Department of Fisheries (DOF) has prohibited the public in Melaka from consuming bivalves until the biotoxin reading reaches permissible levels and mussels are confirmed safe for consumption. In a statement on 5 April, the department said that analyses conducted by its biosecurity laboratory on samples of mussels and water collected from Sebatu, Melaka, on 3 April revealed the presence of the *Alexandrium* species of algae, which poses health risks to humans. The department said this prohibition is a preliminary action taken following cases of contaminated mussels in Negeri Sembilan. The department will continue monitoring for 20 days by conducting regular testing according to the standard operating procedures set under the National Shellfish Sanitation Programme (NSSP). On 2 April, the DOF also issued a notice to operators and farmers to immediately cease all sales and harvesting activities of farmed mussels in Melaka," the statement said. The public is urged to promptly notify the state or District Fisheries Department if they observe any changes in the colour of seawater to red, brown, yellow or green. Find out the full article: [here](#).

EUROPEAN NEWS

28 rapid alert notifications for fishery products

During May 2024, there were 28 rapid alert notifications for fishery products. With 11 rapid alert notifications for bivalve mollusc products, 2 for crustacean products, 15 for other fishery products and no rapid alert notifications for cephalopod or gastropod products. These included 5 consignments of oysters from the Netherlands.

Source: Megapesca Lda Fish Files Lite Newsletter, www.megapesca.com, May 2024.

EU: Proposed to change its *Listeria* criterion in ready-to-eat foods

The EU has notified the WTO of its intention to amend its Microbiological Criteria Regulation as regards *Listeria monocytogenes*. The notified document contains a proposed update to the *L. monocytogenes* food safety criterion laid down in Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005. The proposed text concerns ready-to-eat foods that are able to support the growth of *L. monocytogenes* and for which the food producer isn't able to demonstrate that the level of *L. monocytogenes*

will not exceed 100 cfu/g throughout the shelf-life of the food. Currently, the requirement for such foods is that *Listeria* is not detected (in 25g) before the food has left the immediate control of the operator who has produced the food. The proposal is to replace that requirement with a requirement that such foods should not contain any detectable *Listeria* (in 25g) throughout the entire shelf life of the product. The proposed date of publication and adoption of the regulation is the fourth quarter of 2024. The WTO notification is available [here](#). Comments and concerns about potential impacts of the proposal can be submitted through the national competent authority by 16 July 2024.

EU: DNA fingerprinting test for fish species developed

Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries published an article on an EU-funded project which has pioneered simple DNA fingerprinting technique for identification of fish species on the spot. The new test is based on a disposable 'dipstick', similar to the rapid tests for COVID-19. The Hellenic Centre for Marine Research, with its extensive experience in the fishing industry, and the University of Patra, developed the test, focusing on hake and tuna species. The Commission hopes the method will help fight fraud by distinguishing between different fish populations, as well as different species.

Source: Megapesca Lda Fish Files Lite Newsletter, www.megapesca.com, May 2024.

EU: Health certification amended for live aquatic animals and fishery products

The Commission has amended the wording and content of the health certificates required for the import into the EU of fishery and aquaculture products. The amendments apply to animal health/official certificates for live fish, live crustaceans and products of animal origin, and for fishery products intended for human consumption caught by vessels flying the flag of a Member State and transferred in third countries with or without storage.

Source: Megapesca Lda Fish Files Lite Newsletter, www.megapesca.com, May 2024.

UK: Vulnerabilities to food fraud in post-harvest seafood supply chains

A new paper in *npj Science of Food* investigates the susceptibility of the UK's post-harvest seafood supply chains to fraud. Using the SSAFE food fraud vulnerability assessment tool (available from www.ssafe-food.org), the authors evaluated 48 factors related to opportunities, motivations and controls within UK supply chains. The researchers discovered that these supply chains exhibit medium vulnerability to food fraud, with the highest risks linked to 'technical opportunities'. Technical opportunities cover factors such as the complexity of adulteration and the technical knowledge required to adulterate the material. Certification status significantly

impacts vulnerability levels, with uncertified supply chains, particularly for prawns and salmon, and smaller companies within the food service sector being most at risk. Smaller companies and those in the food service industry showed higher perceived vulnerabilities due to weaker control measures. Implementing basic training or tailored programs that address food fraud prevention could also help reduce vulnerability to fraud. Read the full paper: [here](#).

NORTH AMERICAN NEWS

USA: Study discovers presence of PFAS in seafood

Fish and shellfish (“seafood”) consumption has health benefits yet is a source of exposure to bio accumulative environmental contaminants, such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), that may cause adverse health impacts. The researchers conducted a population-based survey of 1829 New Hampshire (NH) residents in June 2021 to determine consumption frequency, portion size, types and sources of seafood among adults and children (2–11 years old). They purchased the most commonly consumed species from a seafood market in Portsmouth, NH and quantified 26 PFAS compounds. For PFAS with available health guidance values we calculated hazard quotients to assess exposure risk from seafood consumption. Among adults, 95% reported consuming seafood within the last year and shrimp, haddock, salmon, and canned tuna were most frequently consumed. Based on consumption frequencies and meal sizes, we estimated daily seafood consumption rates for adults (median: 33.9 g/day; 95% CI 26.0, 41.8) and children (5.0 g/day; 2.3, 7.7), which are somewhat higher than National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey estimates for the Northeastern US. Read the full article: [here](#).

LATIN AMERICAN NEWS

Venezuela: China signed an inspection procedure and regulations for the export of wild aquatic goods

The Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture reported that “a chapter was recorded in the economic history of the nation, by consolidating in record time the signing of the Inspection Protocol, and Requirements for Export of Wild Aquatic Products from Venezuela to China”. According to the entity, this rubric that consolidates the agreements reached in the international tour that President Nicolas Maduro made through the Asian Giant in 2023, is among the achievements

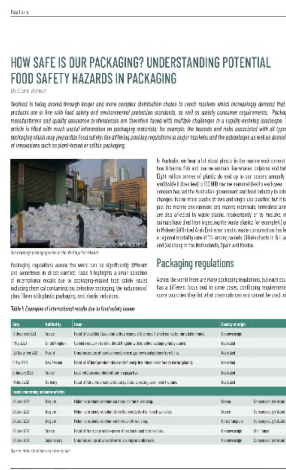
that bilateral cooperation has achieved in half a century and is shown as one of the most significant advances for the fishing and aquaculture sector in the first quarter of 2024. The ambassador of the People’s Republic of China, Lan Hu, added that “this is a great milestone on the path of our cooptation”. Read more news: [here](#).

AFRICIAN NEWS

Cameroon: Poor infrastructure and services are the key challenges

The Case of the Maroua Wholesale Artisanal Fish Market, Cameroon revealed that the significant Fish Loss and Waste (FLW) mainly due to poor infrastructure and services, poses a major challenge for the Urban Wholesale Markets. While it has been demonstrated that markets are crucial in reducing FLW, they can overcome this challenge only if they are equipped with the proper infrastructural facilities and services and operate efficiently. Read the case study along with some recommendations: [here](#).

PUBLICATION



Seafood is being moved through longer and more complex distribution chains to reach markets which increasingly demand that the products are in line with food safety and environmental protection standards, as well as satisfy consumer requirements. Packaging manufacturers and quality assurance professionals are therefore faced with multiple challenges in a rapidly evolving landscape. The following article by Clare Winkel (IAFI Executive Committee Member) is filled with much useful information on packaging materials; for example, the hazards and risks associated with all types of packaging which may jeopardize food safety; the differing packing regulations in major markets; and the advantages as well as down sides of innovations such as plant-based or edible packaging. Read the full article published in the INFOFISH International Magazine, Issue 3/2024 (May-June): [here](#).

The next issue of THE FISH INSPECTOR will be distributed in October 2024. Any information you may wish to have disseminated through this newsletter may be submitted through <http://e-newsletter.infofish.org/>

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