



AN t-ÚDARÁS UM
CHOSAINT
IASCAIGH MHARA

SEA-FISHERIES
PROTECTION
AUTHORITY

Press Release

Issued by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority's Press Office
19th December 2024

Christmas Advice to Food Producers from the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority for Handling Cold-Smoked Salmon

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) is reminding food producers of their legal obligations on how best to handle smoked salmon, a popular fish for the festive season. Fish is an important part of a healthy diet and fish such as smoked salmon contains high quality protein and other essential nutrients such as omega-3 fatty acids. In fact, a well-balanced diet that includes a variety of fish can contribute to heart health and children's growth and development.

Ensuring seafood is as safe as possible requires active attention from the point of harvest or catch, through processing, right through to the point of consumption. Some simple precautions from the point of purchase are required to ensure the safe consumption of this product. For example, smoked salmon should contain an Approval Number on the label – an oval shaped mark with a unique identification number which is an assurance that the product has originated in a premises approved by the SFPA or other Competent Authority.

The SFPA is advising food producers to take precautions to ensure the safety of smoked salmon for consumers to enjoy this Christmas. SFPA's information note entitled 'Cold-Smoked Salmon Producers' highlights some specific food safety legal requirements and recommendations for producers of ready-to-eat cold-smoked salmon. Cold-smoked salmon production involves a specialised process whereby raw salmon is filleted, possibly skinned, dry salted or immersed in brine, dried, and smoked at temperatures of typically 18 to 28°C. The smoked salmon is then cooled, possibly sliced, vacuum packed and labelled prior to storage and distribution. Typically, it is sold to customers as a ready-to-eat food. In contrast to hot smoking, the cold smoking process does not cook the salmon.

The survival and growth of micro-organisms can present a potential biological food safety hazard in cold-smoked salmon. Food Safety Management Systems based on HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) principles and prerequisite programmes are necessary to control potential food safety hazards. EU Regulation

requires Food Business Operators (FBOs) to implement procedures based on HACCP. It is important that FBOs carry out a thorough Hazard Analysis on each step in the process and put appropriate control measures in place. Some specific food safety requirements and recommendations for cold-smoked salmon producers are outlined in the information notice. Furthermore, cold-smoked salmon must be labelled in accordance with legislative requirements that are set in a number of different regulations. These have been summarized in the information notice.

Pascal Hayes, Executive Chairperson with the SFPA, said: “Irish fish products are widely regarded as high quality, wholesome products which provide excellent nutritional value. The SFPA works with the fishing industry to ensure that fish products produced, processed and sold in Ireland or exported meet the highest standards of food safety. By following the SFPA’s food safety tips for handling smoked salmon, producers can ensure that their end customers can safely enjoy the fine taste and good nutrition of smoked salmon over the Christmas period.”

Ends

Note to Editor

Photo Caption

Smoked salmon image courtesy of Bord Iascaigh Mhara

Information Notice

The information notice can be accessed here:

<https://www.sfpa.ie/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=IDse6lq9e28%3d&portalid=0&resourceView=1>

Further Information

About the SFPA

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) is the independent statutory body responsible for the regulation of the sea-fisheries and the sea-food production sectors. It promotes compliance with the EU Common Fisheries Policy, sea-fisheries law and food safety law relating to fish and fish products, verifies compliance and, where necessary, enforces it. Its mandate covers all fishing vessels operating within Ireland’s 200-mile limit, over 2,000 Irish registered fishing vessels wherever they operate, and all seafood produced in Ireland’s seafood processing companies. The

SFPA operates through a network of regional port offices situated at Ireland's main fishery harbours. For further information visit: www.sfpa.ie