How to grade fish by hand

Learner
Workbook

Title	Understand how to grade fish/shellfish by hand
Level	2
Credit value	3

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will:	**The learner can:**
1. Know what the requirements are for grading fish/shellfish by hand	1.1 Describe the facilities required to grade fish /shellfish 1.2 Outline the product control and traceability arrangements during grading operations 1.3 State why it is important to work within limits of own authority and competence 1.4 Describe how to carry out and the importance of recording, reporting and communicating.
2. Know how to prepare to grade fish/shellfish by hand	2.1 Describe how to obtain and interpret grading specifications 2.2 State how to prepare and maintain work areas used for grading
3. Know how to grade fish/shellfish by hand	3.1 Outline how to identify commonly-processed fish/shellfish species 3.2 State how to grade by size 3.3 Describe how to assess and grade by quality 3.4 Outline the handling methods that maintain the quality and condition 3.5 State why accuracy during grading is important
4. Know how to finish grading fish/shellfish by hand	4.1 State the common quality problems and their likely causes 4.2 Describe how to deal with fish/shellfish that is not fit for use 4.3 Outline the action to take when the grading specification is not met 4.4 State why it is important to dispose of waste according to company procedures.

Achieving the Unit

The following information will support you with the knowledge requirements to help you achieve this unit.

Whilst the booklet provides a good source of information, it is not exhaustive. We recommend that you research information yourself via the internet or at your local library. Useful sources of information include the Sea Fish Industry Authority (www.seafish.org) and the Seafood Training Academy (www.seafoodacademy.org).

Seafish have developed a range of training resources in fish processing including:

- Three training DVDs showing methods of processing different species of round and flatfish;
- A fish filleting taught course supported by detailed Trainee and Trainer's workbooks.

There is more information on resources at the end of this workbook, and some fish processing demonstration videos can be accessed via the Library in the Seafood Training Academy website.

……Good Luck!

Lee Cooper
Seafish

UNIT DETAILS

Unit Number: FP.102K

Unit Qualification Number:

Title: Understand how to grade fish and shellfish by hand
Level: 2

Credit Value: 3

UNIT AIMS

This unit supports workforce development for those who are responsible for the hand grading of fish and shellfish in seafood processing businesses. The unit may also be suitable for grading activities in seafood retail businesses.

The unit is designed for use primarily by operatives and others who carry out these workplace activities. The aim of the unit is to assess knowledge and understanding to recognised National Occupational Standards.

CONTENTS

SECTION ONE:

INTRODUCTION

Within the context of this Learner Workbook and the associated Improve Proficiency Qualification, hand grading is carried out in a variety of locations including onboard fishing vessels, at fish markets, at merchants and processors and in many seafood retailers,

The UK seafood industry involves many steps between harvesting and consumption. At important steps in this seafood chain it is important to grade the fish and shellfish to maximise the value of our raw material.

Onboard fishing vessels the catch is graded by species and size so that unwanted species and undersized fish or shellfish can be discarded, and boxes of the same species and roughly uniform sized fish/shellfish can be made ready for landing.

The batches (or boxes) of fish/shellfish landed on the quayside may then need to be sorted again into a more uniform size range, and if they haven't been weighed at sea, then the market will have to de-ice, weigh and re-box/ice the fish[1].

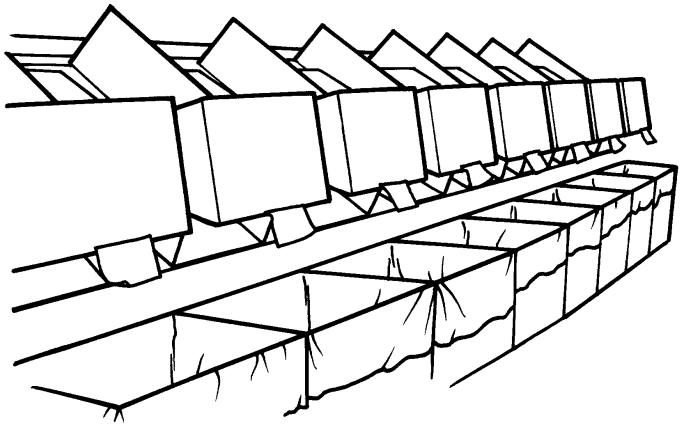
Some markets may also grade by quality using the EU EAB, Torry or QIM schemes. Many markets simply assume that the fish is B grade and allow individual buyers to make their own decisions regarding the relative quality of fish on the market. (see section 3 for an explanation of grades etc..

Once the fish or shellfish arrive at the processor or merchant they may again be regarded into even tighter size ranges and a more careful check of quality may also be carried out.

Whole fish and shellfish arriving at fishmongers may undergo a final sorting, although checking at this stage is usually restricted to

[1] Regulation 01224/2009

ensuring what was ordered has been delivered, and the quality of the delivery meets the fishmongers expectations.



There are in practice only three criteria used in grading. Species, size and quality and it is rare that all three criteria will be applied at the same step in the journey from sea to plate.

Grading by hand is not always the most suitable way in which to grade. Where relatively fine tolerances in size are required, for example in bivalve shell sizes or even the weights of frozen fillets, then automated systems are superior. But all too often a skilled and competent grader is the only effective solution to the problem of sorting out the raw materials, particularly when quality is important.

The end result of grading should be batches of fish or shellfish that are similar in size and quality and of the same species.

While grading costs money it provides those businesses that do it correctly with a way of controlling costs and adding value.

TOOLS, EQUIPMENT and FACILITIES (Ref: 1.1)

Hand grading of fish and shellfish places no great demands on tools, equipment and facilities. There are slight variations depending on whether grading is being carried out on a boat or in a fish processing factory, but there is a lot in common.

Most grading operations will only require the following:

- Raw materials to grade (fish or shellfish);
- A specification to grade against, although this may not be a written one;
    - Species
    - Size
    - Quality
- Space. Grading can take up a lot of space.
    - To store ungraded fish/shellfish;
    - A sorting area / table to spread out the fish/shellfish;
    - To store various batches of graded fish/shellfish and waste;
- Weighing scales;
- Temperature probe;
- Means to measure sizes
    - Simple marks on tables;
    - Graduated rulers,
    - Calipers
- Printer or document control system;
- Handling equipment
    - Pallet truck;
    - Fork lift;
    - Other;
- People
    - Able to recognise species;
    - Assess quality to a required standard;
    - Measure sizes.

ACTIVITY
Using the list above, tick all of the those that apply to your hand grading operation. Add anything we may have missed.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Because the grading operation requires you to handle whole, iced and occasionally live fish and shellfish, and some fish have sharp spines. you will need some form of cut resistant gloves. You will also want to wear some form of waterproof glove and an apron to protect you from prolonged exposure to water.

As it is likely to be cold then your clothing should be suitably warm, and of course your footwear must be appropriate to a wet environment.

PPE must be fit for purpose and supplied free of charge by your employer. You have a responsibility to wear it, look after it and when it needs replacing to bring this to the attention of your employer.

The hat, hairnet, clean coat, plastic arm covers, beard snood etc are not PPE as they are not there to protect you from injury during shucking. They're there to protect the food from contamination by you.

PPE is covered by Health and Safety legislation, whereas the need for hygiene clothing is covered by various Food Safety Laws.

HYGIENE CLOTHING

When handling fish or shellfish it is essential that your outdoor, everyday clothes are covered. The important reason for this is to protect the product from any loose material such as hairs or fluff which might fall from your clothes onto the fish. Remember you are handling food. People will eventually eat it.

Head coverings

- Either a hairnet or hat with a snood which completely encloses the hair;
- Beard net - moustache or beard should also be completely covered.

Overalls

- Everyday clothing covered by a clean washable overall;
- Waterproof apron – disposable or washable;
- Disposable plastic sleeve protectors.

Footwear

- Rubber Wellington boots – waterproof and cleanable.

Never wear outdoor shoes in a seafood handling area – ideally they will be safety boots as you will be manually handling a great deal. And, don’t wear your rubber boots outside of the work area as you don’t know what you will pick up on the soles.

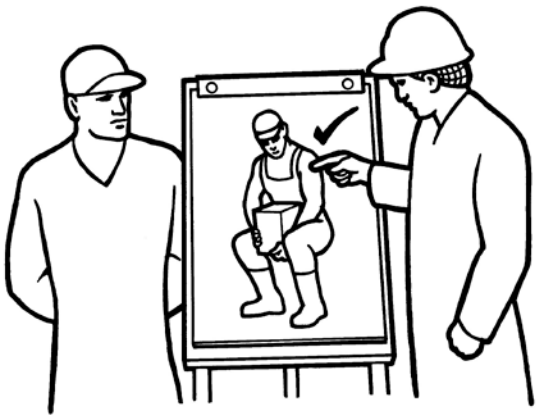
Maintaining Clothing

Your hygiene clothing must be kept clean, to help prevent contamination of the products.

- When you have finished work, scrub clean your apron and boots, wash them with a dilute solution of detergent or bactericidal cleaner and leave to dry;
- Alternatively, you may have a cleaning service to do this for you;
- Fabric items, such as overalls and cloth hats must be laundered after each processing session.

Disposable items must be used once only. Use fresh each time.

ORGANISATIONAL PROCEDURES



Organisational procedures are usually based around a combination of three demands:

- What the Law and regulations require;
- What is generally good practice and required to simply do the job right;
- Particular requirements specific to your role.

Whatever the nature of your seafood job, there will be a whole raft of company procedures that are based on the needs of food safety legislation, health and safety legislation, employment law etc. Most of these are in the background and you will not need to know about them.

The need to wash hands, wear hygienic clothing, use appropriate PPE, be trained to lift and handle weights correctly, work responsibly, maintain records etc all have legislation at heart.

The need to minimise waste, reduce water usage, clean as you go, minimise temperature abuse of the fish or shellfish, handle with care etc are largely driven by industry good practices.

ACTIVITY

With your supervisor's assistance, list the 5 most important[2] company or organisational procedures related to your job. For each procedure make a decision (tick the box) on what is the key reason for the procedure.

	Why is it important?		
Procedure ✍	**Law** ✓	**Good practice** ✓	**Other** ✍

[2] I'll let you decide on what basis a procedure is important or not. Insert text or a tick as appropriate.

Do you draw any conclusions from this list?

Although your employer has a duty to ensure you receive adequate training, supervision and instruction so that you can comply with these organisational procures, it is your responsibility to ensure that you are complying with the law.

PRODUCT CONTROL AND TRACEABILITY (Ref 1.2)

An important aspect of seafood quality and safety assurance is to be able to trace products, ingredients, suppliers, retailers, processing operations or storage procedures through the seafood chain. This is especially important when problems occur. Traceability describes the systematic recording of information about a seafood product from point of harvesting to point of sale.

Hand in hand with traceability is product control and labelling.

Without labels that are unique to each individual product or production batch, it would be impossible to track fish and shellfish through the seafood chain, and to know at each step in the chain how they had been handled and processed.

This ability to trace and track batches of seafood and to know what you and others have done to them is a key part of product control.

Advantages of product control / traceability / labelling

- To meet legal requirements;
- An effective food safety assurance tool;
- Allows companies to manage suppliers and customers;
    - Improved mutual trust between supplier/customers;
    - Reduced quality assurance checks if the supplier is trusted;
    - Potential losses reduced if problems arise;
    - Better cost accounting means more profitable businesses;
- Automated systems can save time.

Each step in the seafood chain will potentially generate new information about the product, including fish reception, grading, processing, packing and despatch.

ACTIVITY

Discuss with your supervisor and briefly record your conclusions to the following questions about the product control and traceability arrangements in your company.

Q. What information do you need to check when receiving fish/shellfish to grade?

Q. After grading a batch of fish/shellfish, what kind of records must you complete?

Q. Do you understand the arrangements for product control and traceability in place for grading operations in your company? Yes/ No

If No, please discus with your supervisor.

If yes, please briefly describe them here.

SECTION TWO:

GRADING SPECIFICATIONS (Ref: 2.1, 4.3)

At the end of Section One you were asked to list the 5 most important organisational procedures related to your job as a fish/shellfish grader. Perhaps the list included a grading specification or standard operating procedure?

Each grading specification will have its own specific requirements, but almost all processing specifications will have common requirements. List the main requirements' of your chosen grading specification here:

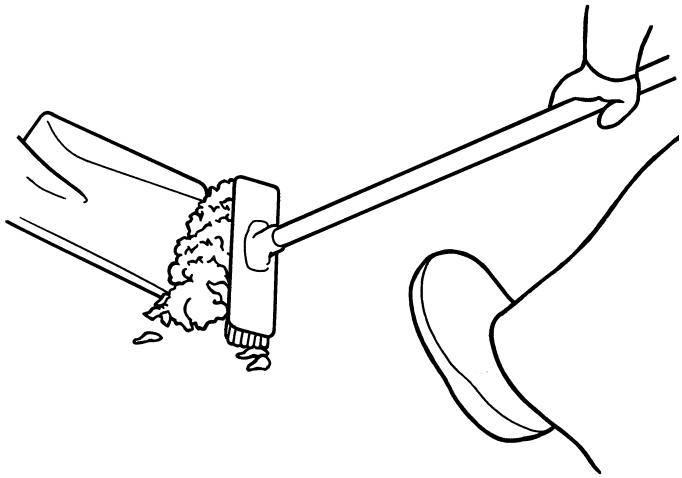
- Species?
- Size ranges?
- Quality/Freshness?
-
-
-
-
-
- Recording requirements.

If you have any problems interpreting the specification then discuss it with your line manager.

Q. What actions do you take if the grading specification cannot be met**?** Use a recent example if possible.

PREPARING THE WORK AREA (Ref: 2.2)

Before you start to grade fish/shellfish you must make sure that the area where you will be working is suitable and ready for use. Use the following checklist



The **workroom** area should be clean, tidy and free from any rubbish.

The paths for moving materials in and out of the grading area should be free of obstruction to allow easy and safe movement.

Tools you will need should be assembled. Check that they are clean, and in good working order

Sorting tables and blocks must be clean and free from all debris.

Bins for the storage of fish waste must be clean, and emptied as required.

Clean boxes for the storage of the graded and sorted fish/shellfish should be in place.

Supplies of ice for re-icing the graded fish/shellfish should be in place, and replenished as needed during the grading operation.

Put on **protective clothing** and wash hands.

Only when you are sure that everything is ready should you begin work.

Hand Washing

Your employer will have trained you in how to effectively wash your hands and will have a procedure on when and how to do this.

We think this is so important that we're including our own brief guide to hand washing here.

Hand Washing - a summary

- Wet hands before applying liquid soap.
- Apply liquid soap (one pull of dispenser).
- Rub hands together vigorously for about 10-15 seconds (count – it's longer than you think!!).
- Make sure you wash both sides of the hands, fingers, thumbs, nails and wrists.
- Rinse thoroughly with clean water.
- Dry thoroughly with a clean paper towel.
- Apply alcohol liquid/gel to hands and massage into all surfaces (if supplied).
- Allow to air dry (do not wipe your hands on your clean overall).
- If gloves are to be worn, apply alcohol liquid/gel to glove surfaces before work.

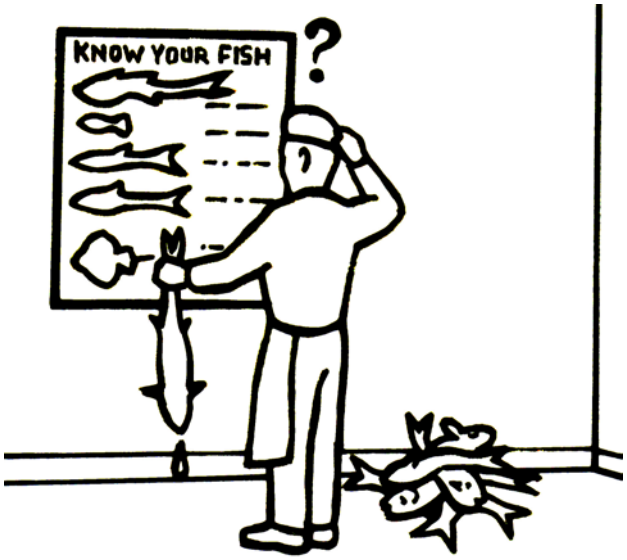
Clean as you go

Clean as you go means keeping your work station in a tidy and hygienic condition so that you can continue to work through your shift. It also applies to you and the periodic need to change clothing and wash hands both for breaks and at other times during the working day.

FISH AND SHELLFISH IDENTIFICATION (Ref: 3.1)

It's important that you can recognise all of the various species and forms that you are likely to encounter during normal grading activities.

Most seafood processing businesses will specialise in a few types of species, while fish merchants and fishmongers/retailers will need to be able to identify a larger number of species. Grading operations at fish markets may also deal with a very wide variety of species.



Seafish have a fish and shellfish training DVD available.

ACTIVITY

List the main species you are likely to be asked to grade and what you use to identify them – their one key characteristic.

Species	Identified by
Example – Haddock	Black lateral line down side of fish

GOOD HANDLING PROCEDURES (Ref: 3.4, 3.5)

Fish and shellfish are highly perishable commodities. Even frozen materials can lose quality and value if handled incorrectly.

While grading fish and shellfish it's important that you handle them carefully, they are after all food. Even live shellfish must be handled carefully to avoid stressed and dead animals.

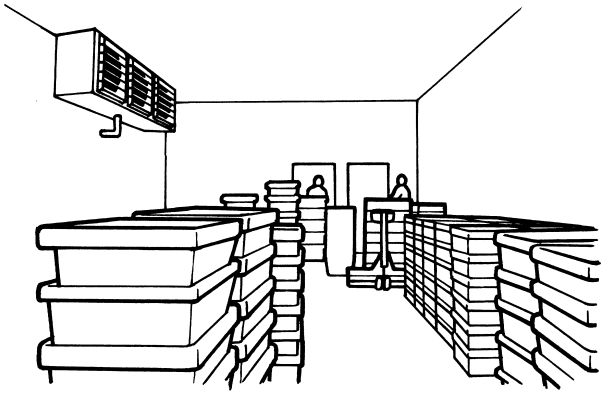
Seafish have a range of technical documents, guides and learning materials on maintaining the quality of fish and shellfish from harvesting through to final consumption, some of which are available via their website.

There are five words though that can be used to summarise the overall approach.

Quick ◊ Clean ◊ Cool ◊ Careful ◊ Consistent

Quick – Don't rush your work, but carry out your step in the chain from harvest to consumption as quickly as possible without compromising quality. Time is money and it's also quality.

Clean – We're dealing with people's food, so cleanliness is essential to good food safety and also good quality. Work hygienically in clean surrounding and avoid compromising the fish and shellfish by exposing them to contamination.



Cool – Temperature is important so keep fish and shellfish at the correct temperature. This may be ambient temperature for live products, iced or chilled for some products. The less time fish and shellfish spend out of the chiller/ice the better. Temperature abuse is one of the main causes of avoidable quality losses in the seafood industry.

Careful – Fish and shellfish are delicate. Live shellfish, particularly bivalves react badly to rough handling and temperature abuse. Chilled fish can still bruise even several days after harvesting. Simple measures like lifting boxes nearer to table height so they don't drop as far will help.

Consistent – Find out exactly what should be done to handle the fish and shellfish to maintain their condition and minimise any avoidable quality losses while they are in your care. Now that you know what to do, do it. Do it every time, do it consistently and help others to do it as well.

We can also add to consistent the word accurate. Whatever you are using to grade by (size, species quality) you need to be accurate and consistent.

Q. In your own words explain what problems may occur if you are not accurate in how you grade fish/shellfish**.**

SECTION THREE

GRADING BY SPECIES

On the face of it, grading by species on a fishing vessel or fish market is simple and straightforward. One species goes into one box, and another species into another box.

Complications may arise where prohibited species are caught and accidently landed.

There are several species of skate (long nosed, black etc) and sharks (basking for example) that cannot be traded and should not be landed.

But for the most part, grading by species is as simple as it sounds, provided you can tell different species apart.

GRADING BY SIZE

Size grading is the most common form of grading in the seafood chain as it is carried out in at least one stage in the seafood chain.

- **Onboard Fishing vessels**

Initial size grading onboard fishing vessels is needed to avoid landing undersized fish and shellfish. The penalties for this can be high, as can the penalty for landing egg carrying crustaceans (berried lobsters and crabs).

Some vessels weigh and size grade fish at sea and land iced boxed fish that are ready for sale. Weighing systems vary from simple mechanical scales to computerised integrated weighing, labelling and traceability compliant systems.

Other landings, including imported whole fish, may not have been:

- weighed at sea;
- carefully sized graded.

These fish will be de-iced on the market, weighed, sorted by size and re-iced before being sold.

- **Fish markets**

Some UK fish markets grade by weight using automated grading lines, while others hand grade by size depending on the volume of grading and the requirements of the market. Depending on the species and the make up of the landing size grades may be extra large, large, medium or small, or EU grades 1 (largest) to 5, or weight grades needed by the buyers.

- **Processors / merchants**

Provided the fish have been previously size graded there is little need for the processor or merchant to size grade fish unless for a particularly tightly specified product.

Variations in fillet sizes are not a problem for some applications such as supplying fishmongers where there is a natural variation in the requirements of customers.

Some applications require very tight portion size control and this is more easily achieved by careful portioning during the cutting stage.

GRADING BY QUALITY

There are three quality assessment schemes in common usage in the UK.

1. EU (EAB) Scheme

- Commonly accepted within the EU;
- By law is used on fish markets ;
- Does not take into account differences in fish species;
- Not detailed enough for most applications;
- No information on remaining shelf life;
- Does introduce an element of physical damage;

This EU system is used in Port Wholesale Markets for the labeling of fish. Assessments are usually carried out by the selling agents or fish inspectors, although some markets simply assume a B grade for all of their fish.

The grades are:

- Extra Quality (E)
- Good Quality (A)
- Acceptable Quality (B)

Anything below a B grade is rejected.

This scheme with three grades of edible fish is too crude an assessment for most processors who need to assign an accurate shelf life assessment to their products.

2. Torry Raw and Cooked Assessment Schemes

- Widely used in UK for past 50 years;
- Developed at Torry Laboratory in Aberdeen;
- Effective objective system for sensory evaluation of fish (QC and scientific trials);
- Gives detailed evaluation of organoleptic qualities of fish (raw and cooked);
- Needs staff to be well trained[3];
- Limited number of species covered by these schemes and no new schemes under development.

The Torry schemes score fish and shellfish from a high score of 10 to a low score of 1. The boundary between acceptable and unacceptable (consumer) quality is usually accepted as between 6 and 5 for most species.

The Torry schemes are quick to use by trained staff and can be applied to whole fish, H&G fish and raw fillets and also to cooked fish and shellfish.

The availability of cooked schemes lends the Torry schemes to use by processors and fishmongers to carry out spot checks on quality. The cooked schemes are often accepted as easier to apply by recently trained staff.

Torry schemes are applied by averaging out a range of scores for the various quality indicators of raw or cooked fish. Half points may also be given for borderline cases. It is possible to arrive at a reasonable score

[3] Introductory, Intermediate and Advanced training courses available from Seafish.

when only a few indicators can be assessed such as fillet colour, texture and smell.

3. Quality Index Method (QIM) Assessment Schemes

QIM is a more recent assessment method that applies to whole fish.

Quality Index Method

- A modification from an Australian scheme, developed through fish labs in Denmark, Iceland & Holland;
- Effective objective system for sensory evaluation of fish (QC and scientific trials);
- Needs staff training;
- Large number of species covered.

QIM applies to whole raw fish and is an additive approach. The final score is arrived at by adding scores for appearance odour, texture etc.

In experienced hands it can be very effective, but problems arise when some indicators are not available for assessment. For example, H&G cod cannot be assessed by checking the eyes or smelling the gills as these have been removed.

At the present time there are no cooked schemes for QIM.

Both Torry and QIM provide good estimates of remaining shelf life.

Quality Assessment Indicators

All three schemes use the same indicators of quality.

- Eyes - colour and form
- Gills - colour, mucus and odour
- Skin - colour and mucus
- Flesh - texture and colour
- Blood – colour

Some seafood businesses grade fish according to QIM or Torry schemes, or expect their suppliers to do so.

Other businesses simply define certain attributes in the intake specification as a means of identifying the occasional rogue fish.

ACTIVITY

What method is used to grade fish in your business? Investigate and describe below the means used to grade by size or quality as appropriate.

QUALITY PROBLEMS (Ref: 4.1)

Quality problems during grading are usually restricted to the occasional fish or shellfish that is undersized, or poor quality, or is damaged in some way as to make it unsuitable for further processing.

Poor freshness quality may also be an issue during intake if quality specifications have not been met by the supplier.

Other problems may exist, but may not become apparent until the fish or shellfish are processed. Problems such as: excessive bruising of tissues leading to discoloration; high bacterial counts on fish; and shellfish that exceed the limits on biotoxins. However bacteria or other potential contaminants are not something that usually forms part of the grading process.

ACTIVITY

Discuss with co-workers or your supervisor. List any quality problems encountered during grading along with (if possible) your opinion of the cause.

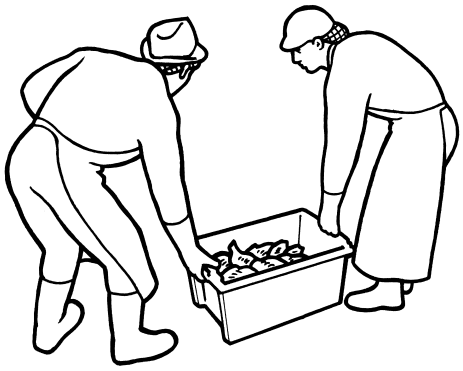
Quality problem	Possible cause
Example: Some fish are poor quality – their flesh is soft and eyes cloudy. They have a sour smell.	Some boxes have insufficient ice on delivery and the top fish have been allowed to warm up. Even the best fish in the box were only just of an acceptable grade.

Microbiological Quality of Fish Products

The assessment of the microbiological contamination of fish products is an issue for your Quality Assurance team, rather than you. Provided you work hygienically, avoid contamination and maintain good temperature control there is little else you can do personally to ensure the microbiological safety of the products.

Fit For Use (Ref:4.2)

There are a number of reasons why particular fish may be considered unfit for use:



- Fish is of very poor freshness quality – visual clues include appearance of whole fish, appearance of cut fish, smell etc.
- Fish exceeds microbiological criteria set by customer;
- Excessive physical damage to the fish;

Q. What do you do with fish/shellfish that are not fit for use?

How often do you have fish or shellfish that is unfit for use?

Accuracy (Ref: 3.5)

Usually when we think of accuracy in grading it is simply a case of ensuring that the fish or shellfish in a particular batch are of a single species and all fit within the size range specified.

Processors and merchants may rely on the grading carried out on the market and may not necessary re-grade or even closely check the accuracy of the grading during intake. This means that the accuracy of your work is even more important, not less.

What do you think are the possible consequences or problems that may be caused by inaccuracy of grading?

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-
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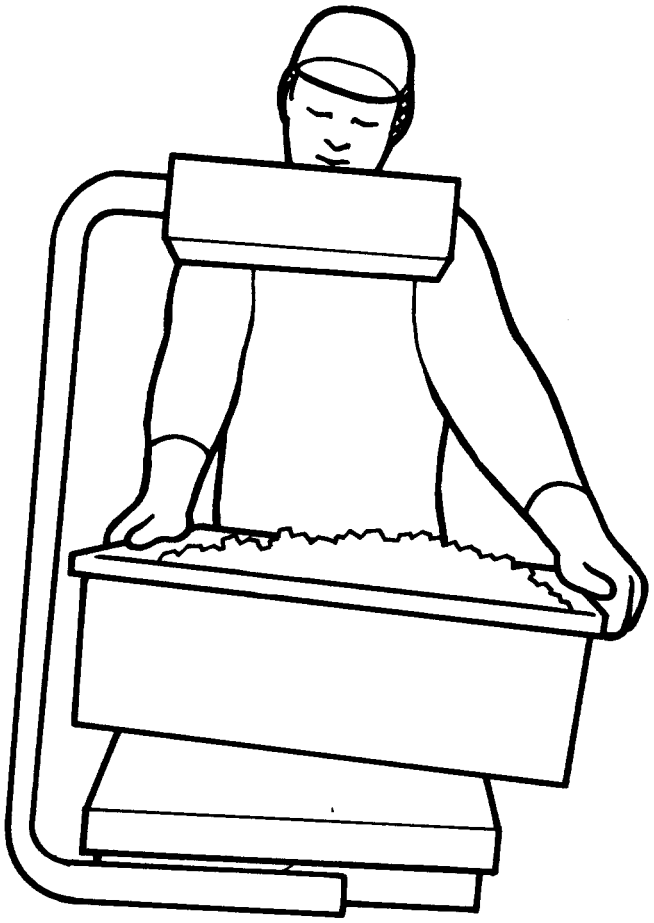

WASTE DISPOSAL[4] (Ref: 4.4)

Ideally, there should be no waste products from the hand grading process, other than waste ice from the delivery boxes.

Occasionally there may be an occasional fish or shellfish that is unfit for use, or very occasionally an entire consignment that is rejected for some reason.

Other forms of waste may include packaging material if the fish/shellfish have been delivered in non returnable/reusable packaging. Polystyrene packaging is usually compressed and collected for recycling.

Reusable packaging (fish boxes and tubs) will need washing either onsite or via a box washing returns service.

Excessive waste water and effluent production is a real issue in fish and shellfish processing operations where excessive amounts of water are used, and little is done to keep solid material out of the drains.

The grading operation will use some water and produce some effluent and can contribute to keeping costs down by:

- Keeping waste material out of the drains to reduce the effluent strength charges;
- Using only the water needed to reduce water volume charges.

Together these represent a significant cost to a seafood business.

[4] Seafish have extensive waste minimisation training and technical materials available.

SECTION FOUR

RECORDING, REPORTING AND COMMUNICATING (Ref:1.4)

Recording, reporting and communicating are essential activities that take place every day while we are at work. They probably take place every hour of our working day, so just what are we recording, reporting and communicating about?

Here are a few of our ideas on general issues.

- Product, processing or packaging specifications;
  - You may be given a new written grading specification;
- Targets, schedules or deadlines;
  - You may verbally communicate to your supervisor that a scheduled task has been completed;
- Results, scheduled milestones, routine outcomes;
  - You may record the completion of temperature checks on incoming fish or shellfish;
- Health and Safety or Food safety issues;
  - This could include you reporting problems to your supervisor, or receiving updates on changes to policy;
- Impending operational problems;
  - Verbal reports on what might go wrong;
- On-going operational problems;
  - Usually verbal reports on what's being done to fix the problem;
- Task Handovers;
  - Informing those taking over from you at the end of your shift.

These are pretty general. Can you list below three different examples of a communication, a report and a record from a typical working day during grading operations?

By way of a definition:

A report is usually one way – you report to someone, or they report to you.
Communications are usually two way – information is exchanged and may be discussed.
Records – a permanent or semi permanent record of an outcome – almost always written.

Examples of Records made	
Reports – verbal or written	
Communications – what were they about?	

The Importance of Communication and Reporting

What do you think may happen if communications and reporting were absent, delayed or inaccurate?

Think about this for a moment or two before looking at our list.

Perhaps even make your own list to compare to ours.

Communications and reports that are delayed, inaccurate, incomplete or absent may lead to:

- Misunderstandings and confusion;
- Poor working relationships between colleagues and team members;
- Drop in H&S or food safety performance;
- Production problems that may lead to increased waste or increased costs;
- Damage to equipment or machinery;
- Quality losses and perhaps even product recalls;
- Loss of sales / customers due to poor quality, out of specification products etc.

When communications and reports are on time, accurate and fit for purpose, what may be the results?

- A more efficient, effective and pleasantworkplace.

Effective Communication

How is this achieved?

1. Providing information

- Find somewhere appropriate to communicate – where the noise levels are suitable;
- Be precise and stick to the points;
- Use notes if appropriate;
- Maintain appropriate eye contact;
- Use polite gestures;
- Pay attention to the recipient's body language;
    a. Are they showing an interest?
    b. Have you 'lost them'?
    c. Are they taking notes?
- Ask occasional questions to check their understanding of the messages.

2. Receiving Information

- Listen carefully;
- Indentify the important points;
- Take notes if appropriate;
- Ask questions to confirm your understanding;
    a. Use open questions or paraphrase what is being said;

    b. Avoid closed questions unless you really want a Yes or No as the reply;
- Check all important information with the information provider;
- Show you are paying attention by:
    a. The way you stand;
    b. Making appropriate eye contact;
    c. Asking the right questions;

Effective Recording

The main purpose of records are to provide:

- evidence of what happened during the work period;
    - evidence that certain steps were taken;
    - evidence of any problems, or the absence of problems;
    - a record of key data such as temperatures, quantities, batch numbers etc.
- confirmation that the people tasked with collecting and writing down data actually did so – that's why you have to sign and date forms;
- information for:
    - financial analysis;
    - problem solving and fault diagnosis;
    - traceability;

Many of the records we keep are routine, with the same data recorded batch after batch, day after day. The very routine nature of recording may make you assume it's not important and it doesn't really matter. IT DOES!

It's important to the customer, your bosses and you.

A wise woman once said "if it's not written down, it didn't happen." We can take that to mean, if you keep careful, accurate and honest records of what you do, as required by your employer, then should a problem arise they will be your best defence, for you and your bosses as well.

This only works though if you write down what actually happens, not what you think should have happened.

So:

- Write down the actual temperature of the delivery, the one you actually measured;
- Write down the actual time the check weigher was tested, not the time it was supposed to have been tested;
- And please, Don't fill in records in advance.

Recording what has happened is an important part of any seafood processing or handling operation. Almost everything you or your colleagues do will result in a record somewhere in the company.

Records and the accurate recording of data are essential if the business is to survive and prosper and your job is to be secure. We need to record all kinds of information during our working day. What kind of records do you need to complete during a normal intake operation?

Document name	Describe its purpose

LIMITS ON AUTHORITY (Ref: 1.3)

We all have limits on our authority, even the Managing Director. Usually these limits are tested when something goes wrong. Do you know your limits? What you can and cannot do?

What do you do if there is something wrong with the fish you are given to process? Describe the limit of your authority in case of a problem.

What do you think are the possible problems that may be caused if you do not stay within the limits of your authority?

List them here and then talk to your supervisor to see if you have listed everything.

As you become more experienced in your job, will the limits of your authority increase? Yes / No

If yes, how will they change?

SECTION FIVE:

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

GRADING RELATED

1. Identification of Fish and Shellfish DVD – available from Seafish.

2. Seafood Quality Assessment Training from Seafish:
    a. Familiarisation DVD;
    b. Short Introductory course;
    c. One-day Intermediate course;
    d. Five-day Advanced course.

GENERAL

1. Food Safety training courses from level 1 to level 3:
    a. Available in various languages;
    b. Available as taught courses, open learning programmes and by eLearning[5];
    c. CIEH and REHIS approved.

2. Health and Safety training courses:
    a. Level 1 taught course;
    b. Level 2 as a taught course or open learning module;
    c. CIEH and REHIS approved.

For information on all of these training resources and others, contact Seafish:

Seafish Training
Sea Fish Industry Authority
Humber Seafood Institute
Europarc
Grimsby
DN37 9TZ

Tel 01472 252300
Email training @seafish.co.uk

[5] A free to study, level 2 course is available at www.seafoodacademy.org

See also: www.seafish.org and www.seafoodacademy.org

For up to date information on resources please visit the Library on the Seafood Training Academy website www.seafoodacademy.org and download the Library Guide for FDQ Learner Workbooks, where you will find links to the above documents and much more.