CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Fish Products Standards and Methods Manual is to provide inspectors with recognized standards and methods to be used when determining the acceptability of fish and fish products under the authority of the Fish Inspection Regulations.

It must be recognized that the Fish Products Standards and Methods Manual is a guide only and is not intended to supersede the requirements of the Fish Inspection Regulations. Inspectors should always have the legislation in mind, and should use this manual as an aid in the interpretation of the Regulations.

2. AUTHORITIES/REFERENCES

2.1 The Fish Inspection Act (FIA) and the Fish Inspection Regulations (FIR) are the relevant authorities on which this manual is based. While this manual provides more detail than the FIA or the FIR, it does not have any legal authority.

2.2 The manual does not deal with the policies and procedures for fish products inspection and facilities inspection. The Fish Products Inspection Manual - Policies and Procedures and the Facilities Inspection Manual, respectively, address these subjects.

2.3 The standards do not cover package/container integrity defects, chemical and microbiological contamination, the application of additives, weight requirements or labelling requirements. Applicable legislation and administrative guidelines made under the Fish Inspection Regulations, the Food and Drug Regulations, the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Regulations and the Weights and Measures Regulations regulate these aspects of the products.

3. ORGANIZATION OF THE MANUAL

The Fish Products Standards and Methods Manual is divided into chapters of related inspection elements which are sub-divided into individual standards.

Each standard is divided into common headings, except for instances where a different format might be required due to the nature of the standard.

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Introduction:

Includes the name by which the fish covered by the standard is known, or if more than one type of fish is covered by the standard, by a general name which covers all species for the particular process. It describes the authority under which the standard is elaborated, exclusions and the general requirements for acceptability.

Scope:

The scope provides a clear statement on product and species requirements covered by the standard. It describes general statements on raw material and the processing of the product using good manufacturing practices. Documents for good manufacturing practices are listed.

Nomenclature:

This section contains special nomenclature requirements for the product as appropriate.

Forms of Product Presentation:

This section provides a definition of the product, types, styles or forms of product presentation. Other styles of presentation are permitted under the circumstances specified.

Sampling:

Sampling for the purpose of determining acceptability is an integral part of the standard. Sampling tables are prescribed which specify the minimum level of sampling required.

Description of Defects:

This section describes the essential quality factors and tolerances used as criteria for determining acceptance or rejection of a sample unit for taint, decomposition, unwholesomeness or other requirements. The provision of "tolerances" is intended to allow Inspectors some flexibility when applying the regulatory requirements.

Exceptions to the tolerances can occur for justifiable reasons. Inspectors can be more rigid when defects are due to careless or intentional behaviour, or when the problems are detrimental to health as opposed to aesthetics.

Examination Methods:

The examination method is an important part of the standard, laying out for the inspector the steps to be used in examining the sample unit to determine compliance.

Classification of "Defective" Units:

Defines the criteria for determining a "defective" sample unit.

Lot Acceptance:

This section outlines the factors to be used in determining the acceptability of the lot based on lot acceptance procedures.