

CHAPTER 5.4.

CRITERIA TO ASSESS THE SAFETY OF AQUATIC ANIMAL COMMODITIES

Preamble: In the context of this chapter the word 'safety' is applied only to animal health considerations for *listed diseases*.

Article 5.4.1.

Criteria to assess the safety of aquatic animal products imported (or transited) for any purpose regardless of the disease X status of the exporting country, zone or compartment

Point 1 of Article X.X.3. of all disease-specific chapters (Sections 8-11) lists *aquatic animal products* that can be imported (or transited) for any purpose regardless of the *disease X* status of the *exporting country, zone or compartment*. The criteria for inclusion of *aquatic animal products* in point 1 of Article X.X.3. are based on the absence of the *pathogenic agent* in the *aquatic animal product* or inactivation of the *pathogenic agent* by treatment or processing.

The assessment of the safety of the *aquatic animal product* using the criteria relating to treatment or processing can only be undertaken where treatments or processing are well defined. It may not be necessary to provide details of the entire treatment or process undertaken. However, the steps considered critical in the inactivation of the *pathogenic agent* of concern should be detailed.

It is assumed that treatment or processing prior to importation (i) is done by using standardised protocols, which include the steps considered critical in the inactivation of the *pathogenic agent* of concern; (ii) is conducted in accordance with good manufacturing practices; and (iii) that any other steps in the treatment, processing, and subsequent handling and transport of the *aquatic animal product* do not jeopardise the safety of the traded *aquatic animal product*.

Criteria

For an *aquatic animal product* to be considered safe for *international trade* under the provisions of Article X.X.3., it should comply with the following criteria:

1) Absence of *pathogenic agent* in the traded *aquatic animal product*.

a) There is strong evidence that the *pathogenic agent* is not present in the tissues from which the *aquatic animal product* is derived.

AND

b) The water (including ice) used to process or transport the *aquatic animal product* is not contaminated with the *pathogenic agent* and the processing prevents cross contamination of the *aquatic animal product*.

OR

2) Even if the *pathogenic agent* is present in, or contaminates the tissues from which the *aquatic animal product* is derived, the treatment or processing methods to produce the *aquatic animal product* inactivate the *pathogenic agent* such as:

a) physical (e.g. temperature, drying, smoking);

AND/OR

b) chemical (e.g. iodine, pH, salt, smoke);

AND/OR

c) biological (e.g. fermentation).

Article 5.4.2.

Criteria to assess the safety of aquatic animal products imported (or transited) for retail trade for human consumption regardless of the disease X status of the exporting country, zone or compartment

Point 1 of Article X.X.11. (mollusc disease-specific chapters), Article X.X.12. (amphibian, crustacean and fish disease-specific chapters) and Article 10.4.16. lists *aquatic animal products* for retail trade for human consumption. The criteria for inclusion of *aquatic animal products* in point 1 of Article X.X.11. (mollusc disease-specific chapters), Article X.X.12. (amphibian, crustacean and fish disease-specific chapters) and Article 10.4.16. include consideration of the form and presentation of the product, the expected volume of waste tissues generated by the consumer and the likely presence of viable *pathogenic agent* in the waste.

For the purposes of this criterion retail means the selling or provision of the *aquatic animal product* directly to the consumer with the intended purpose of human consumption. The retail pathway may also include wholesale distribution of the *aquatic animal products* provided they are not further processed by the wholesale distributor or the retailer, i.e. are not subjected to actions such as gutting, cleaning, filleting, freezing, thawing, cooking, unpacking, packing or repackaging.

It is assumed that: (i) the *aquatic animal products* are used for human consumption only; (ii) waste may not always be handled in an appropriate manner that mitigates the introduction of the *pathogenic agent*; the level of risk is related to the waste disposal practices in each Member's country or territory; (iii) treatment or processing prior to importation is conducted in accordance with good manufacturing practices, and (iv) any other steps in the treatment, processing and subsequent handling of the *aquatic animal product* prior to importation do not jeopardise the safety of the *aquatic animal products*.

Criteria

For *aquatic animal products* to be considered safe for *international trade* under the provisions of point 1 of Article X.X.11. (mollusc disease-specific chapters), Article X.X.12. (amphibian, crustacean and fish disease-specific chapters) and 10.4.16., it should comply with the following criteria:

1) the *aquatic animal product* is prepared and packaged for retail trade for human consumption; AND

EITHER

2) it includes an amount of raw waste tissues generated by the consumer that is unlikely to result in the introduction and establishment of the *pathogenic agent*;

OR

3) the *pathogenic agent* is not normally found in the waste tissues generated by the consumer.

NB: FIRST ADOPTED IN 2009; MOST RECENT UPDATE ADOPTED IN 2018.