GUIDANCE FOR PORTS, MARKETS, AGENTS AND OTHER BUSINESSES

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1. Handling undersize fish

This is an initial guidance which may be updated if the Commission updates its position.

You must not send undersize fish to direct human consumption markets but they can go to:

• non-direct human consumption markets (e.g. food additives and fish proteins)

• non-human consumption markets (e.g. fish meal, bait, cosmetics, and fertilisers)

The fisherman who lands the catch is responsible for the undersize fish until it is given or sold to another owner. The owner of the undersize fish must make sure that they follow the appropriate rules as outlined below**.**

2. Non-direct human consumption - Food Hygiene Rules

Undersize fish for non-direct human consumption markets must continue to be handled according to food hygiene rules at sea and onshore.

Fishing vessels should continue to follow food hygiene rules and apply them to undersized fish. If you are a port, market or other business handling fish you are likely to be already registered as a food business and following these rules.

3. Non-human consumption- Animal By-product (ABP) Rules

Undersize fish for non-human consumption markets must be handled according to ABP rules. These rules do not apply to fish on-board the vessel. They apply onshore from the moment the owner decides the undersize fish will go to a non-human consumption market.

The arrangements described below are based on the assumption that the fish is handled and stored properly and remains in good condition. As such it is assumed that the fish will be given the lowest risk classification under ABP rules – Category 3.

If the fish is allowed to spoil the risk class will be increased and additional measures will be required.

4. Storing and handling ABP fish onshore

Storage facilities for ABP fish and sites planning to carry out processing of ABP fish e.g. if you provide micro digesters, silos, composters, all need ABP approval.

Vehicles transporting ABP fish need to be ABP registered, or work as a transporter to an ABP approved site.

Contact DAERA Sea Fisheries Inspectorate to apply for ABP approval/registration. There are no fees associated with ABP approval/registration; we therefore encourage it.

For more information on ABP approval visit the [Animal By Products](#) pages on the DAERA website.

5. Storage and handling sites: owners' responsibilities

Site owners or 'operators' are responsible for:

•   getting ABP approval

•   the operation and upkeep of the facility

•   keeping relevant records

6. Separation of ABP fish from human consumption fish

You must keep sufficient separation between ABP fish and fish for human consumption during handling, storage and transportation.

A business or port providing ABP storage and handling facility will need to make sure there is sufficient separation. As examples, methods of sufficient separation could include:

- clear space between ABP fish and food fish
- some form of leak proof divide when ABP fish and food fish are in the same area

Leak proof divides could be made by:

- having a separate compartment, container or an entire fridge only used for ABP fish in refrigerated spaces
- shrink wrapping ABP fish or the containers the fish is held in

Don't put ABP fish boxes immediately above or beside boxes containing human consumption fish. This is because fish boxes don't have leak proof lids.

Fish boxes or other storage containing ABP fish must be clearly labelled as 'CATEGORY 3: not for human consumption'.

7. Setting up a hub port system

A port or other business setting up a hub system for collecting ABP fish from a number of surrounding ports must have ABP approval as the main port or facility. The ABP approval process will focus on the main port and the smaller 'supplier' ports will be monitored through the tracing of consignments.

A smaller port in the hub must also have ABP approval if the ABP fish is stored there before being collected and taken to the main port.

8. Arrangements if no ABP storage facility is available

Place ABP fish directly and immediately onto ABP registered transport. This is likely to be the case at landing points with limited infrastructure e.g. beaches or slipways.

You can transport human consumption fish and ABP fish on the same vehicle as long as:

• they have been handled and stored in identical conditions

• there is sufficient separation.

9. Landing ABP fish for pot bait exchange

You don't need ABP approval if you land undersize fish and sell it directly as pot bait to other vessels operating out of the same port. However fisheries buyers and sellers rules will still apply to this process. The vessel receiving the bait will need to be registered as a 'buyer'.

Owners who store and handle undersize fish in any way before selling it as pot bait must have ABP approval.

10. Keeping records for ABPs

When ABP fish is transported it must be accompanied by a commercial document that includes:

• date of transport

• description of contents including ABP category and quantity

• origin and destination addresses with contact names at both

• ABP approval or ABP registration numbers for the factory or vehicle

• signature of whoever is responsible for the contents

11. Inspections and enforcement

DAERA Sea Fisheries Inspectorate will inspect ABP sites at fishing ports. Frequency of inspection will be on a risk based approach.

Local Environmental Health and Trading Standards officers will also have an enforcement interest. They will need to make sure undersize fish only goes to appropriate markets and that the accompanying paperwork is correct.