

KNOW YOUR COD AND POLLOCK PRODUCTS

Raw material handling determines product quality:

- Top quality cod and pollock products come from a variety of gear types and freezing methods.
- Line-based gear such as longline submits fish to less potential damage, resulting in better quality.
- At-sea freezing, heading and gutting is even more important for cod and pollock than for other species due to the problems of belly burning and gall bladder staining.
- Belly burning may occur if the viscera are not removed promptly after catch. Hydrochloric acid may escape from the stomach and burn the meat, resulting in reduced recoveries.
- Gall bladder staining may occur if the fish is not frozen soon after catch. If left unfrozen, the gall bladder may burst within one or two days of catch. Bile stains result in reduced recoveries.
- The following matrix plots quality between gear types and freezing methods:

		Freezing →	
		Shore frozen	Frozen at sea (FAS)
Method of catch	Longline	Good quality	Excellent quality
	Pot	Average quality	Good quality
	Trawl	Average quality	Good quality

Check that the fish was properly bled:

- A pinkish hue in the flesh suggests poor bleeding and is a mark of inferior product.
- An orange hue suggests that the fish was poorly bled and then frozen twice.

Learn to recognize inferior quality products:

- It is important for seafood buyers to distinguish between superior and inferior quality product.
- Differentiate superior products from inferior by one or a number of the following characteristics.

Cod and Pollock Fillets		
Feature	Superior quality	Inferior quality
Preparation		
Skin	Removed	Removed
Bones	Removed	Removed
Meat		
Parasites	Few to none	Nemotodes (worms) common
Bruising	None	Some
Gaping	Little to none	Some
Color	Pure white	Brown (gall bladder stain / belly burn) Yellow (rancidity) Pink (poorly bled) Orange (poorly bled, twice frozen)
Other		
Tripolyphosphates	None to trace levels	Larger amounts

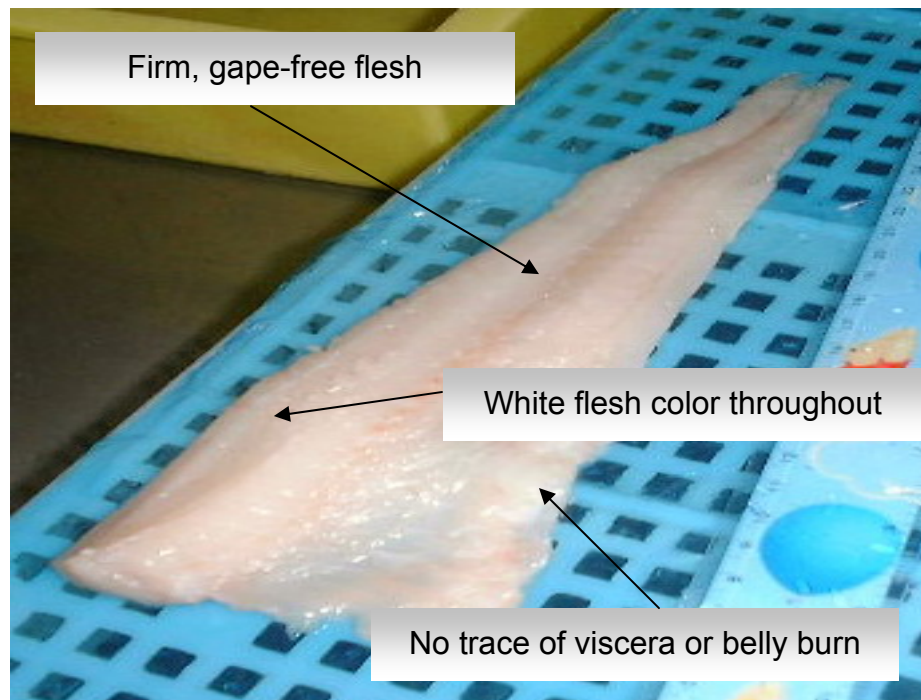
Headed and Gutted (H&G) Cod and Pollock		
Feature	Superior quality	Inferior quality
Preparation		
Collar	Present (CBO), removed (J-cut)	Present (CBO), removed (J-cut)
Viscera	Removed	Present (full or partial)
Meat		
Parasites	Few to none	Nemotodes (worms) common
Bruising	None	Some
Color	Pure white	Brown (gall bladder stain / belly burn) Yellow (rancidity) Pink (poorly bled) Orange (poorly bled, twice frozen)
Other		
Tripolyphosphates	None to trace levels	Larger amounts

See the back of the page for example photos

Content reviewed by:



Example of a superior quality pollock fillet:



Example of inferior quality pollock fillets:

