GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING OF FISH MAWS FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS ALONG THE VALUE CHAIN

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

Ministry of Agriculture,
Animal Industry & Fisheries
Directorate of Fisheries Resources

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GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING OF FISH MAWS FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS ALONG THE VALUE CHAIN

1.0 BACKGROUND

The code provides basic information on the laws, regulations, procedures and principles for addressing safety and quality for fish maws. It should be applied during handling, preparation (such as drying), processing, packaging, storage, transport and marketing of fish maws.

To operationalize the laws covering fish, this guideline is issued to provide for a streamlined value chain flow and the involvement of all actors, with minimum standards for any gutting facility for fish at local market level.

The guidelines are also premised on the fact that the quality aspects at the Nile perch value chain have been well handled and fish exports continue to be guaranteed by the Directorate of Fisheries Resources as the Competent Authority. Fish maws are products attached to Nile perch, and unsustainable quality practices may endanger the whole export industry with undesirable socio-economic consequences if the prime market rejects our fish and fishery products.

Purpose / Objective of the code

I. To provide guidelines on handling, processing, marketing and trade of fish maws to be undertaken by business operators with minimum contamination, and reduced/eliminated hazards while promoting fair trade

ii. To provide for a streamlined value chain flow and involvement of all actors, with minimum standards for any gutting facility for fish at local market level including facilitating government revenue generation.

iii. To strengthen official controls (certification, inspection,

sampling, testing) of fish maws and ensure compliance to the regulations and standards premised on the quality assurance system built for the export of the Nile perch value chain

iv. To ensure fish exports including fish maws are guaranteed by the Directorate of Fisheries Resources as the Competent Authority and therefore minimize and /or eliminate food safety risks that may endanger the whole export industry with undesirable socio-economic consequences if the prime market rejects our fish and fishery products.

v. To raise a high level of awareness and promote voluntary compliance to the actors along the value chain

2.0 LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

Fish maw traders should be licensed, and to be licensed they must provide the following:

(a) TIN number
(b) National ID/passport
(c) Phone and physical address
(d) Age
(e) Copy of previous license
(f) An application filled out (an online application form)
(g) Proof of registration by the licensing office.
(h) Proof of Payment from bank depending on the type of License required.

3.0 HANDLING OF FISH AT LANDING SITES

All fish must be handled according to the following conditions:

(a) All fish must be landed at approved/gazetted landing sites and must be inspected by fisheries staff at the landing site;
(b) No fishing vessel will be allowed to land with fish maws or gutted fish;

(c) The fish to be commercially traded should be issued with a fish movement permit that indicates the quantities and the destination;

(d) Fish from landing sites must be carried as whole fish (no gutting/removing fish maws) apart from those to be consumed within the local areas;

(e) Fish and fisheries products are to be carried in clean containers to the handling facility;

(f) Fish and fisheries products should be transported in insulated containers/trucks/boxes;

(g) The insulated trucks should be licensed;

(h) Fish handlers must wear clean uniforms when handling the fish; and

(i) Fish handlers must be medically examined by relevant health officials.

4.0 GUTTING (PROCESSING) FACILITY FOR FISH

a) A person shall not engage in any gutting of fish at landing sites without a license or permit issued by the chief fisheries officer or authorized licensing officer.

b) Gutting shall be carried out only at an approved facility outside the official area handling fish for export but within the designated landing site.

c) Applicants for an approved facility shall submit the design of the facility to the Central Competent Authority (CCA) for approval before proceeding with construction.

d) The design of the handling facility should clearly show these key features:

i) Clean water source (potable water).

ii) A raised working surface/platform with smooth and easy to clean surfaces, and hand washing facilities supplied with soap. The raised surfaces must be constructed with a shade, drainage systems and solid waste handling facility;

iii) Accessible toilet facilities must be available for the personnel.

e) The area should be fenced off/enclosed.

f) All staff/personnel handling fish and fishery products shall follow Good Hygiene Practices (GHP) that include: Hand washing before handling fish; having a bi-annual medical examination and certificate; wearing protective uniforms, headgear, footwear/gumboots (PPE); and training in hygiene and food safety.

g) The facility must have a fish and fish maws storage facility which is approved (insulated).

h) The fish and fishery product shall be kept at temperatures approaching that of melting ice.

i) All fish received for gutting in a processing facility other than the factory must be accompanied by a fish movement permit issued by an authorized officer.

j) The facility shall be inspected by a local fish inspector

k) Processing capacity will be determined and allocated by the Chief Fisheries Officer

l) The facility must have a management plan and management team.

m) The fish for gutting must meet the minimum recommended fish size as per the Fish (Fishing) Rules, 2010.

n) Fresh fish and fishery products shall be kept at temperatures approaching that of melting ice during transportation.

o) The fish maws leaving the facility shall be issued with a fish maws movement permit.

p) The gutted fish destined for the market shall be issued with a fish movement permit.

q) Gutted and whole fish shall not be transported in the same vehicle/vessel/container.

r) Fish maws and gutted fish shall not be transported in the same containment.

s) Vehicles used for transport of fish and fish products shall be approved and issued with a certificate of inspection and license.

t) Transport of fresh fish on motorbikes shall only be in insulated containers/boxes.

u) The transporter must have a valid transporters license.

5.0 HANDLING OF FISH AT LOCAL FISH MARKETS

5.1 Fresh Products

(a) Apply for a license as in application requirements above.
(b) There should be defined areas in the market for handling fish;
(c) Fish traders should wear a clean uniform when handling fish;
(d) The fish must be handled on easy to clean surfaces and they should be clean at all times;
(e) There should be appropriate cold chain storage facilities;
(f) There should be hand washing facilities;
(g) The handling personnel should be medically examined and pronounced as fit to work; and
(h) There should be potable clean water all the time.

5.2 Cured Fish Products

(a) Should operate in a dry raised platform;
(b) The handling surfaces should be easy to clean, smooth, durable and should be kept clean at all times;
(c) The working environment should be kept in a hygienically acceptable condition with waste management facilities;
(d) There should be appropriate storage facilities for the fish; and
(e) Handlers must dress in overcoats and headgear during time of work.

6.0 FISH MAW SPECIFIC GUIDE / STANDARD

a) Fish maws shall be prepared from sound swim bladders of the designated fish species, which is of an acceptable quality and fit for human consumption;

b) Swim bladders shall be extracted from mature fish that is complying with the fishing rules and regulations;

c) Water used for washing the fish maws thus should be clean;

d) After washing, the fish maws shall be dried either in the sun or in artificial dryers until the required moisture content is obtained;

e) The fish maws, while drying, shall be protected against contamination from dirt, sand, and insects;

f) The dried fish maws shall have the characteristic colour and odour of dried fish maws and shall be free from any indication of spoilage such as mouldiness;

g) The product shall be wholesome and free from stains, blood vessels, shreds, blood spots and any other form of foreign matter.

h) Dried fish maws shall have maximum moisture content of 8%, maximum insoluble ash of 1.5% and maximum total ash content of 15%.

i) Dried fish maws shall comply with the following microbiological and other contaminant limits:

Type of microorganism	**Maximum limit**	**Method of test**
Salmonella in 25g	Absent	ISO 6579
E.Coli per g	Absent	ISO 7251
Staphylococcusaureus CFU per g	10^3	ISO 6888-1
Total viable count	105/g	ISO 4833
Clostridium perfringers	Absent	ISO 7937
Yeast and Moulds	10^4	ISO 21527-1

Type of contaminant	Maximum limit (mg/kg)	Method of test
Arsenic	0.1	US ISO 27085
Lead	0.3	US ISO 27085
Cadmium	0.3	US ISO 27085
Mercury	0.5	AOAC 990.04

j) The dried fish maws shall also not contain more than 10 micrograms per kilogram total aflatoxin of which not more than 5 micrograms per kilogram may be aflatoxin B1 when tested in accordance with US ISO 16050.

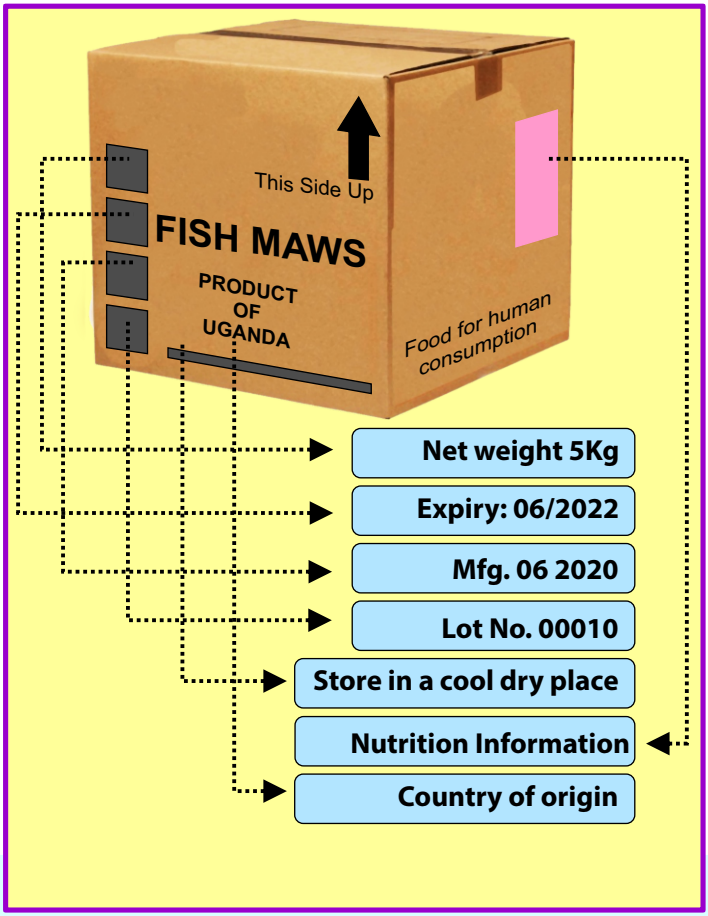
k) Dried fish maws shall comply with maximum pesticide residue limits established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

l) If food additives are used in processing of dried fish maws, these should be indicated on the label

m) Packaging of dried fish maws shall be in accordance to set guidelines in relevant fish quality assurance rules.

n) Specific labelling requirements: the product shall be legibly and indelibly marked with:

- The name of the product
- Name and physical address of processor or/packer
- Net weight in grams or kilograms
- Date of packaging
- Batch or code number
- Expiry date
- Storage conditions
- Country of origin
- Nutritional labelling
- Nutrition and health claims made accordingly


This Side Up
FISH MAWS
PRODUCT
OF
UGANDA
Food for human consumption
Net weight 5Kg
Expiry: 06/2022
Mfg. 06 2020
Lot No. 00010
Store in a cool dry place
Nutrition Information
Country of origin

7.0 ROLES OF DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS

7.1 Fish Maw Processors and Exporters

a) Register and be member of an association and provide proof of belonging to the association (recommendation);
b) Provide proof of supplier contract with approved fish processing facilities;
c) Apply and acquire license by filling out an online application form;
d) Establish a processing establishment;
e) Fish processing facilities shall be inspected and if compliant be issued with an establishment approval certificate before being licensed;
f) Fish maws exporters and processors must implement a traceability system and comply to all other requirements specified in the Fish (Fisheries and Aquaculture) Rules – 2017;
g) Fish maw exporters shall buy maws from fish maw traders and value-added maws from factories.
h) No fish maw processor or exporter shall buy fish maws from landing sites.
i) Fish maws exporters and processors must declare their source of fish maws from factories and fish maw traders;
j) Pay fish levy for any fish leaving Uganda; and
k) Fish maw processors and exporters shall be required to provide returns monthly.

7.2 ROLES OF BOAT OWNERS AND FISHERS

a) Register as boat owner or fisher;
b) Possess a license, the licensee shall submit the previous year's data before obtaining a new licence;
c) Licensees shall only sell fish to licensed fish traders or suppliers or community members for local consumption.

7.3 Roles of fish maw trader

a) Provide documentation required for licensing. Fish maw traders must provide proof of contract with approved facility for fish maw processing;
b) Follow official controls (Inspections, certification, sampling, testing, approvals) as the Competent Authority
c) Pay for license and get a license;
d) Purchase fish maws from fish processors with approved establishments;
e) Purchase fish maws from locally consumed fish at landing sites and not on waters;
f) Maintain fish quality and safety during transportation and marketing; and
g) Provide returns to the Directorate of Fisheries Resources.

7.4 Roles of fish suppliers

a) Provide documentation required for licensing;
b) Pay for license and obtain license;
c) Purchase fish un-gutted from boat owners;
d Sell the fish to processing factories and national markets;
e) Maintain fish quality and safety during transportation and marketing; and
f) Provide returns to the Directorate of Fisheries Resources.

7.5. Roles of Directorate of Fisheries Resources

a) Provide overall policy guidance
b) Provide regulatory services as the Competent Authority.
c) Provide training and sensitization to all stakeholders.
d) Prepare programs for the development of the subsector value chain
e) Promote PPP in developing the fish maw value chain.

8. CONCLUSION

These guidelines will be implemented as an interim measure until the Ministry comes up with a new Fisheries and Aquaculture Act. They will be revised from time to time.

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