

Quality Handling Reminders

Quality is Cash image adapted from an ASMI poster

QUALITY IS CA\$H

PUNCTURE WOUNDS - \$\$\$

Caused by picking or gaff hook and allows bacteria to enter the flesh and cause spoilage.

SUNBURN & TORN SKIN - \$\$

Sunburn is caused by leaving fish on deck and results in mushy flesh. Torn skin is caused by rough handling while picking.

GAPING - \$\$

The separation of muscle layers can be caused by high temperature rigor, bending while in rigor, or lifting by the tail.

BELLY BURN - \$\$\$

Pressure from stacked fish in holds, totes and bags and/or temperature can speed belly burn and result in mushy flesh.

GASHES - \$

Although not always caused by fishermen, gashes allow bacteria to enter flesh and cause spoilage resulting in meat that must be excised.

BRUISING- \$\$\$

Caused by rough handling such as throwing fish, holding fish by the tail, flicking fish and ultimately results in waste.

MUSHY FLESH - \$\$\$

Caused by poor handling leading to enzymatic breakdown & spoilage resulting in a dry, mealy texture & rancid flavor.

Best practices for the highest quality salmon



KILL QUICKLY

WHY: Quick deaths extend the pre-rigors and rigor phases, **staving off bacterial growth to keep fish fresher longer** and causing fewer net marks and drop-outs.

HOW: **Short sets!** Keep soaks to an hour or less and deliver frequently.



JUST CHILL & FAST!

WHY: **Colder fish = fresher longer.** Temperatures 33-38 F keeps spoilage at the slowest rate practical.

HOW: **Turn on RSW systems early,** try for (33- 38 F) before adding fish. Fully immerse all fish. If using ice, allow for **1 pound of ice for every 3-4 pounds of fish.** Mix ice with seawater to make slush the consistency of oatmeal.



HANDLE WITH CARE

WHY: **Rough handling leads to bruising,** blood spots and gaping. Remember, this is human food, and **appearances matter.**

HOW: Use a salmon **slide** or a **deck mat** or both. Do **not** step on, kick, or throw fish. Don't grab the fish by the tail; this causes backbone separation and bruising.



BRAILER WEIGHTS: LESS IS MORE

WHY: Heavy bags cause bending and crushing of stacked fish. Fish are easily damaged while in rigor.

HOW: Limit brailer weights to **500- 600 pounds** or less. Avoid pulling multiple or large brailer bags through small hold openings.



bled fish don't bruise & dead fish don't bleed

WHY: Improves texture and prevents bruising.

HOW: Immediately after removing the fish from the net, use the pick, knife or a finger to **cut through the gill**. When possible, do both sides. Place fish in flooded hold or tote with chilled water or slush.



HOLD 'EM & FLOAT 'EM

WHY: Proper insulation = more efficient chilling and reduced operating costs. Floating fish ensures proper circulation of chilled water around every fish and **reduces compression between fish**.

HOW: Wood surfaces should be **coated and sealed**. Hatch coamings and covers should prevent deck water from entering the hold. **Insulate the hold** to reduce incoming heat and preserve ice. Ensure you have **enough water to make fish float**.



COVER THEM UP

WHY: Exposure to the sun's rays ruins a catch.

HOW: **Cover your fish!** If your catch can't be covered in a hold, use an insulated tarp keep in the cold and keep out the sun.



KEEP IT CLEAN

WHY: Proper sanitation **reduces bacteria growth** on all fish contact surfaces.

HOW: After each set, hose down the deck. After each delivery, **flush all fish contact surfaces and the RSW system with clean water**. Every 2-3 deliveries, scrub fish contact surfaces with a chlorine/bleach solution (1/2 cup chlorine/bleach to 5 gallons of water = approx. 25 ppm). **Wash brailer bags** thoroughly. Ask your tender or processor for fish hold cleaner.

