

Fishing:

All suppliers must be approved based on risk assessment (see 3.5 Supplier Approval Procedure and 3.5.1 Supplier Risk Assessment for details). Fishermen, agents and merchants will be chosen based on their ability to comply with the following procedures.

The capture method and handling practices during and immediately following capture must be such as to minimise trauma to the animal. Therefore:

- All crab and lobster (animals) must be creel or pot caught and ideally creels and pots should be design to enable escape of juvenile animals and allow eventual escape of all over time.
- Pots should be checked regularly and not left dormant for long periods.
- Any lost pots must be retrieved where possible to avoid 'ghost' fishing. Fishermen's associations are also encouraged to partner with organisations such as 'Ghost Fishing UK' to retrieve lost gear.
- When landing and sorting, animals must be handled with care so as to avoid unnecessary stress or damage.
- Any bycatch must also be handled with care and returned to the sea as quickly as possible.
- Storage on board vessels will vary dependant on size and duration at sea. Day boats predominately store animal dry in fish trays or bongos. These should be covered with sacking and kept wet with sea water. Alternatively, the animals may be held in small sea water tanks, in this case the water must be continually replenished. Larger vivier boats will only be landing crab. These will be held in large sea water tanks with circulating sea water for the duration of the trip (5 to 7 days).
- If held or transported in sea water tanks it is currently necessary to nick the claws of the crab so that the pincers are rendered powerless. This is to prevent crab from damaging each other during communal storage and transport. Although this undoubtedly causes some trauma, failure to do so will result ultimately in further stress and the death of all of the animals.
- Wherever possible nicking is to be avoided unless you know that crab will be stored in vivier tanks for prolonged periods.
- Under no circumstances shall nicked crab be returned to the sea.

Transport:

It is recognised that during landing and transport for processing, stress to the animal cannot be totally avoided. Therefore, the company is committed to reducing transport and storage times wherever possible. The change in environment, temperature, water quality, exposure to air, light, noise, food deprivation, overcrowding, inability to hide and careless handling can all result in significant stress. Therefore, steps must be taken to minimise the impact of these for the welfare of the animal.

- Crab pickups should be co-ordinated in order to minimise the time at the quayside and in transit. Trips vary from a few hours for local pick-ups to overnight journeys, maximum 24 hours. Journeys longer than this should be avoided.

- During transfer from boat to transport, animals must be handled with care so as to avoid unnecessary stress or damage.
- Crab transported 'dry' should be kept moist with the use of sacking and dependant on the length of the journey this may need to be refreshed. The temperature of the vehicle should also be controlled. The temperature should be such to avoid large temperature changes. Cool, moist, dark, quiet conditions being the ideal.
- If transported in sea water tanks, again the water temperature should be such to avoid large temperature changes and must be aerated.

NOTE: It is important to understand the physiology of the animal to best manage the conditions they require. For crab and lobster see the 'Shellfish Association of Great Britain's Advisory Note on Crustacean Storage and Transport' for guidance.

Holding:

Storage must be monitored in order to maintain the correct conditions. Crab held dry should be held under chilled conditions (again avoiding large changes in temperature) and keep damp by wetting sacking placed on top of each container. For crab held in sea water, ensure the aeration system is operating and the original water temperature is maintained. Crab is held overnight or through the weekend must be monitored closely. The storage must be reviewed and refreshed if required. Crab can be held for up to 60 hours if in good condition and stored correctly. However, ideally crab should be cooked within 24 hours of delivery.

Crab Processing:

Inspection:

All deliveries are inspected to assess the condition and quality of the crab from each boat and merchant. Where crab arrives in poor condition and investigation will be carried out to determine which point in the supply chain failed.

Suppliers which continue to supply poor condition or out of specification crab will be delisted (also see SOP81 Crab Inspection).

Dispatch:

All operatives handling animals should be appropriately trained. Crab and lobster can be brought to the production area in small fish trays or bongos to large dolav style tanks. If stored in water the water is drained before being brought into the area.

From the smaller containers the animals will be manually placed onto the processing line. Larger tanks will be tipped so that the animals can be pulled onto the line. All are handled as each crab or lobster is inspected. Dead animals are rejected. Large amounts of dead animals will be as a result of poor welfare in the supply chain and as such is taken very seriously. Fishermen are not paid for dead animals to encourage good handling and storage.

All crustaceans processed by the company are electrically stunned resulting in instantaneous insensibility to pain prior to immediate cooking.

Sale:

In the interests of animal welfare, live crustaceans (crab and lobster in this case) will not be sold to members of the public or untrained handlers.

Reporting:

The welfare of the animals we handle will be reported monthly. This will be measured by the following KPIs. It is the company's intention to make year on year improvements throughout the supply chain:

1. 100% of crustaceans caught using static gear.
2. % of crustaceans humanely stunned (target 100%)
3. % of nicked crab (Nicking of crab to be reduced through the development of better transportation methods and more immediate processing capabilities)
4. % of dead crustaceans rejected (target <3%)
5. 90% transportation and holding times achieved (target max 24 hour transport / max 24 hour holding).