

Companies approved for use of Nova Scotia Seafood Brand must meet all program requirements listed below. Companies must demonstrate compliance by providing evidence, such as records, or proof of process during an on-site audit. Corrective action records must be kept where conditions do not meet the specified requirement.

### GENERAL CRITERIA

Applicable to all processed lobster products using the Nova Scotia Seafood Brand

### LOBSTER SOURCE/HANDLING

CRITERIA DESCRIPTION	
	All lobsters included in the Nova Scotia Seafood Brand program must be harvested from a legal, licensed fishery.
	All lobsters must be sourced from a Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified fishery.
	All live lobster suppliers must be listed and be able to demonstrate traceability of date and location of catch.
	All live lobster suppliers must be able to demonstrate use of best practices during harvesting, handling, holding and transportation.
	All Nova Scotia based employees in contact with live lobster must have completed an approved Lobster Quality Handling Course.
	Employees must demonstrate proper handling at all times during processing.

### LIVE LOBSTER HOLDING

CRITERIA DESCRIPTION	
	Lobsters must not be over-packed in crates during short-term storage. A maximum weight of 100lbs (+/- 5%) is allowed per crate.
	The water used for holding shall be free of contaminants, clean and maintained.
	Water quality shall be monitored during holding of live lobsters in a holding tank. Records must show at a minimum: temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen and ammonia levels. See Appendix for guidelines on short-term and long-term storage.

### PROCESSING CRITERIA

CRITERIA DESCRIPTION	
	All product shall be processed following Safe Food for Canadians Regulations.
	All product shall be prepared from wholesome, live lobster that shows signs of vitality.
	The water used for cooking shall be of potable quality or clean seawater.
	End product will be all natural, containing no additives (i.e. phosphates) or injections. Salt water brine is permitted.
	Product must be free from foreign matter. See appendix for further guidance.
	The declared quantity on a package shall accurately reflect the quantity being supplied. See Appendix for further guidance on Net weight/drip loss.
	The product shall be kept at -18°C or below deep to maintain the quality during transportation, storage and distribution.

### PRE-PROCESSING PRODUCT REQUIREMENTS

#### In-shell Whole and Tail Product Specifications

CRITERIA DESCRIPTION	
	Top grade lobsters shall be selected for in-shell whole and tail products.
	In-shell tails shall be free of the intestinal tract.
	In-shell products shall not be damaged (cracked/broken shell) and shall be complete (not missing legs/claws).
	Product shall be purged for 24-96 hours, in ambient temperature, meeting minimum water quality requirements. See appendix for further guidance.
	Whole lobsters shall be fully-meated. Evidence of this can be provided by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brix testing (See Appendix for guidance)</li> <li>• Historical data based on harvest location/season/molt stage</li> <li>• Sampling of lot to assess meat yield</li> <li>• Demonstration of product approval from buyer. Records shall show that buyer was provided with photos showing meat fullness from a sample of lobsters in lot and that buyer agreed that meat yield is acceptable.</li> </ul>

### SENSORY EVALUATION – COOKED LOBSTER

Wholes, Tails, Sections

CRITERIA DESCRIPTION	
	<b>Appearance:</b> Whole in-shell lobsters shall not be damaged or soft shell. Abnormalities shall not be found on more than 5% of the sample.
	<b>Colour:</b> The meat and shell colour shall be uniform and characteristic of <i>Homarus americanus</i> . 5% of the sample unit shall not display distinct discoloration.
	<b>Cooked Meat Colour:</b> Shall be white to creamy white with some light gray.
	<b>Cooked Shell Colour:</b> The red color may vary from orange-red through rich-red.
	<b>Raw/HPP - Meat Colour:</b> Meat shall be a red color which may vary from orange-red through rich-red on the exterior and a translucent white to creamy white with some light gray on the interior.
	<b>Raw/HPP - Shell Colour:</b> The color shall be green-brown however due to genetic differences may vary from dark brown, blue, light orange or include patterns such as yellow spotting.
	<b>Odor/Flavour:</b> Product shall not have distinct objectionable odors or flavours indicative of tainted, decomposed or unwholesome lobster
	<b>Flavor:</b> The flavor shall be typical of <i>Homarus americanus</i> and may vary from bland sweetness to slightly salty.
	<b>Texture - Cooked product:</b> The texture shall not be soft and mushy, but shall be tender yet fibrous and moist.
	<b>Texture - Raw/HPP product:</b> The texture shall not be soft and mushy, but shall be firm yet not fully cooked.
	<b>Dehydration:</b> The lobster shall be glazed to prevent dehydration during freezing and storage. Lobsters shall not display excessive loss of moisture clearly shown as white or yellow abnormality on the surface.

### RECORD KEEPING/CONTROLS

CRITERIA DESCRIPTION	
	A Quality Management Program (QMP), or comparable preventive control food safety program, made available for review prior to the on-site assessment. The documents provided must include product specifications.
	Controls in place to ensure the product is handled properly during processing and results in a final product that is not tainted, decomposed, or unwholesome. Controls may include records for receiving, processing, storage, recorded inspections and final product evaluation.
	Records must show percentage of mortalities that are removed from the inventory and indicate disposal method.
	Records of microbiology results must be available for review. See Appendix for guidance.
	Records from a minimum of the past 30 days that are relevant to the criteria mentioned above shall be maintained (up to date, legible) and made available upon request.

### APPENDIX

#### GENERAL CRITERIA

CRITERIA DESCRIPTION	
	<p><b>Net Weight/drip loss:</b> No more than 2.5% of the lot may have a negative error larger than the tolerance based on drained weight (ex. drip loss).</p> <p><i>Note: The net weight of the product does not include the weight of the glaze or salt water brine. The net weight shall conform to the Tolerances for Net Quantities for Catch Weight Products as per Consumer Packaging and Labeling Regulations (Archived January 15, 2019).</i></p>
	<p><b>Foreign Matter:</b> Extraneous material shall not exceed 2mm as per Health Canada Guidelines. Foreign matter presence in the sample unit does not pose a threat to human health (i.e. shell, barnacle, gill, grit), and is readily recognized without magnification, inspected visually or using other foreign matter detection methods (i.e. x-ray scans). Refer to Inspection Level I, AQL = 6.5 Sampling Plan as per Fish Inspection Program Sampling Policy Annex D - Attribute Sampling Plans (Archived January 15, 2019).</p>

#### WATER QUALITY GUIDELINES FOR ON-SITE HOLDING

SHORT-TERM STORED LOBSTERS (3-14 days)	
Seasoned in seawater	Temperature must be a maximum of 4°C (39.2°F)
Dissolved oxygen must be greater than or equal to 80% saturation	Ammonia levels less than 2ppm
LONG-TERM STORED LOBSTERS (More than two weeks)	
Long-term storage is anything longer than two weeks and requires individual storage and different water quality requirements	
PURGING	
<p>In-shell lobster products, purging is required for 24-96 hours, in ambient temperature, meeting the following water quality requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dissolved Oxygen ≥ 80%</li> <li>• Total ammonia &lt;2.0ppm</li> <li>• Salinity range – 29-35ppt</li> </ul>	
If purging occurs prior to supplier receiving product, records must be kept.	

### MICROBIOLOGY

#### COOKED LOBSTER PRODUCTS (*Wholes, Tails, Sections*)

<b><i>E. coli</i>*</b> Number of samples units – 5, acceptance number (c) -1, m/g – 4, M/g – 40. Reject if 2 or more units exceed m, or if any unit exceeds M.
<b><i>Coagulase Positive Staphylococci</i>*</b> Number of samples units – 5, acceptance number (c) -1, m/g – 1000, M/g – 10000. Reject if 2 or more units exceed m, or if any unit exceeds M
<b><i>Salmonella spp.</i>*</b> Number of sample units - 5, acceptance number (c) - absent in each 25g sample or pooled samples of 125g. Reject if <i>Salmonella spp</i> is detected.
<b><i>Listeria</i>*</b> Number of Sample units – 5, Less than 100 CFU/g
<b><i>Aerobic Plate</i>**</b> Number of sample units – 5, acceptance number (c) - 2, m/g – $5 \times 10^5$ , M/g – $10^7$

#### RAW, BLANCHED OR HPP LOBSTER PRODUCTS (*Wholes, Tails, Sections*)

<b><i>E. coli</i>*</b> Number of sample units – 5, acceptance number (c) - 2, m/g – 4, M/g – 40. Reject if 3 or more units exceed m, or if any unit exceeds M.
<b><i>Coagulase Positive Staphylococci</i>*</b> Number of sample units – 5, acceptance number (c) -1, m/g – 1000, M/g – 10000. Reject if 2 or more units exceed m, or if any unit exceeds M.
<b><i>Salmonella spp.</i>*</b> Number of sample units - 5, acceptance number (c) - absent in each 25g sample or in pooled samples of 125g. Reject if <i>Salmonella spp</i> is detected.
<b><i>Listeria</i>*</b> Number of Sample units – 5, Less than 100 CFU/g
<b><i>Aerobic Plate</i>**</b> Number of sample units – 5, acceptance number (c) – 3, m/g – $10^6$ , M/g – $10^7$

\* Refer to CFIA Appendix 2 - Bacteriological Guidelines for Fish and Fish Products (end product) – Archived January 15, 2019

\*\* As per criteria for action defined in FAO – Traditional microbiological quality control.

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Company

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Date