

UE, mussel industry relieved due to changes to analyze toxins

The European Union (EU) has agreed to modify the procedure to determine the presence of lipophilic toxins in mussels once these have already been processed.

The change, which was announced by Brussels through the Community Reference Laboratory for Marine Biotoxins, implies the existence of an analysis methodology for boiled or sterilized mussel different from that used with the raw product.

As mussels undergoes dehydration when subjected to processing, the proposed solution is to rehydrated samples that are to be analyzed, for which liquid is added in different proportions according to the transformation process.

The modification of the protocol was an insistent demand of the mussel sector, the cookers, the canning industry and the Government of Galicia, due to problems arising from the implementation of the chemical analysis method instead of the bioassay in mice, e newspaper *La Voz de Galicia* reported.

As the level of lipophilic toxins present in molluscs is measured with a system based on liquid chromatography and detection method with tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS / MS), significant differences are observed between the values obtained when analyzing the same bivalve molluscs fresh and processed.

These differences have caused problems to mussel catchers and transformers and even to the Technological Institute for the Control of the Marine Environment (Intecmar).

This is because, for example, a fresh product that had lipophilic toxin levels below those allowed (160 micrograms per kilo), increases its rate once subjected to a cooking or sterilization process.

Juan Manuel Vieites, general secretary of the National Association of Canned Fish and Shellfish of Spain (Anfaco- Cecopesca), stressed that these differences caused alarm in the EU rapid alert system.

The leader thanked the support of the director of the Community reference laboratory, Ana Gago, who collaborated with the mussel sector presenting the proposal to the national laboratories and discussing it with the General Directorate for Health (DG Sanco) of the EU.

Although Vietes recognized that the mussel industry is now a little quieter, sources from Arousa cookers said they did not know "if this will be an intermediate or final step to achieve the legal certainty required in the sector," *Diario de Arousa* reported.

Source : [http://fis.com/fis/worldnews/worldnews.asp?l=e&ndb=1&id=74381\(05/02/15\)](http://fis.com/fis/worldnews/worldnews.asp?l=e&ndb=1&id=74381(05/02/15))