

## New technology reduces fish farming agony and extends shelf life

New farmed fish slaughter technology developed by Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena (UPCT) is able to reduce fish stunning time by 80 per cent, significantly reducing animal suffering. At the same time, it improves the quality and freshness of the fish, with a shelf life extension of up to 50 per cent.

Researchers from the UPCT, in collaboration with the University of Murcia and companies Pescados de Acuicultura de Murcia, Servicios Atuneros del Mediterráneo, and Cubiplaya, have validated this new technology on an industrial scale with aquaculture fish, such as the sea bream, obtaining stun times inferior to one minute, compared to the more than two minutes (sometimes more than ten minutes) that it takes the fish to remain still with the conventional system.

The procedure, which the Polytechnic has patented and whose license will be used by the San Pedro del Pinatar-based Cubiplaya, uses natural anesthetizing substances that are included in the ice with which the fish death by hypothermia takes place.

"Both the stunning and the sacrificial processes are much faster thanks to the use of nanoencapsulated essential oils and very significantly the stress and animal suffering are reduced," says professor Antonio López Gómez, coordinator of these R&D work.

"The tests have shown that the freshness of the muscle is greater and the shelf life is prolonged for more time in refrigeration to more than 50 per cent more than usual", adds the researcher of the School of Agronomists of the UPCT.

These researches have also involved collaboration, especially with sea bream production, the Spanish Institute of Oceanography (headquartered in Mazarron) and IMIDA (Marine Resources Centre of San Pedro del Pinatar).

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