

# ***PATAGONIAN TOOTHFISH - FROZEN ON BOARD H&G***

## ***Species Background Information***

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<b>Common name:</b>	Patagonian Toothfish
<b>Scientific name:</b>	<i>Dissostichus eleginoides</i>
<b>Max size:</b>	2.2 metres
<b>Max reported age:</b>	50 years
<b>Average length:</b>	80 cm
<b>Average weight:</b>	3.5 kilograms
<b>Climate:</b>	sub-Antarctic; below 50°S
<b>Biology:</b>	



The Patagonian toothfish, known also as Mero, Chilean sea bass and Black hake is found in sub-Antarctic waters on shelves around islands and submarine banks. They are primarily bottom-living, in depths of 300 to 2000 metres, although move off the bottom on occasion to feed.

Patagonian toothfish reach sexual maturity between 70 and 95 centimetres in length at around 10 years old. They grow up to 2.2 metres in length and 100 kilograms in weight. As yet, the maximum age of this species is unknown, however, initial estimates indicate that Patagonian toothfish live up to 50 years. Trawl operators target, on average, four to nine year old Patagonian toothfish. The older fish are thought to inhabit deeper waters and canyons which are less accessible to trawl gear. At harvest by trawlers, the average toothfish is 80 centimetres long and around 3.5 kilograms in weight.

**Fishing grounds:** Heard Island & McDonald Islands Fishery (HIMI).  
Macquarie Island Fishery

**Fishing method:** Demersal trawling.

**Seasonality:** Available year round.

# ***Patagonian Toothfish on-board Processing Specifications***

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**Raw Material:** Patagonian Toothfish (*Dissostichus eleginoides*)

**Code:** PTO

## **Processing H&G:**

**Head cuts:** The head cut is an angled 'J' cut and is clean with no ragged edges and no head bone. Baader blades are monitored for sharpness and changed and sharpened as soon as any dullness is noticed.

**Tail Cuts:** The tail cut is vertical at the narrowest point of the tail. It is clean and has no ragged edges.

**Gut Cavity:** Thoroughly cleaned with minimal gut residue.

**Washing:** Fish is washed thoroughly and the trunk is massaged in direction toward the tail to assist removal of residual blood from the back bone.

## **Packing Block Frozen Fish:**

HGT fish under 6 kilos is frozen in pans in the plate freezer. The grading which applies to this production is as below:

<b>Small</b>	Up to 1 kg per piece
<b>Medium</b>	1 kg - 2 kg per piece
<b>Large</b>	2 kg - 4 kg per piece

For packing this fish, a pan is lined with blue coloured poly sheet and with the appropriate grade and species label placed face down on the tray. Fish are soldier packed such that at least 20 kilos of fish is in the tray and to ensure that the tray is not overfilled in such a manner as could cause squashing or excessive distortion to the fish when in the plate freezer. Once the fish is packed the polysheet is tied up to enclose the fish for best protection.

Once packed the fish are placed in the plate freezer and the trays filled with seawater in order to create a full glazed block.

After freezing the blocks are knocked out of the pans and sewn into the printed woven bag supplied for use with toothfish. The bag is marked with the grade of the fish and the packing date before being stowed in the freezer.

### **Packing IQF Fish**

As this fish is too large to pack into pans it is frozen in the blast freezer. The fish is hung, tail down, by using a hook through the anal vent of the fish. The anal vent seems to be strong enough to support the weight of the fish and avoids the problems associated with tying or making a hole in the fish. We have had no adverse market reaction to this technique.

**LL**                      4kg - 6 kg per piece

**XL**                      6kg - 10 kg per piece

**XXL**                     10 kg up per piece

This fish is packed into draw string bags and marked with packing date and grade.

In order to have conformity and to assist with the deduction of tare weights, IQF fish are packed as follows:

**LL**                      4 fish per bag

**XL**                      2 fish per bag

**XXL**                     1 fish per bag

