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DEGLAZING ASSESSMENT OF HAKE FILLETS: IMPACT ON PUBLIC HEALTH

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RESUMO

Glazing is a widely used technique in the food industry, especially in seafood products. The technique aims to preserve the quality and to extend the shelf-life of products. It involves covering the seafood with a thin layer of ice, creating a protective barrier that prevents direct contact with oxygen and slows down the deterioration process. This practice is essential to ensure the freshness and safety of products, especially in a context where seafood is highly perishable and susceptible to microbiological contamination. However, glazing can also be controversial. Excessive use of ice can mask the quality of the product and even constitute fraudulent practices, harming consumers and market integrity. This study focused on assessing the glazing rate across three brands of Hake fillets, totaling 54 samples, and it was carried out in Sorocaba city, located in the state of São Paulo. The products were purchased from local supermarkets, with intact packaging. The analyses were conducted following standards described in official manuals (MAPA, 2018). The results revealed that two brands (A and C) complied with the maximum allowable glazing rate, which is 12% (IN MAPA no. 21, 2017), while one (B) exceeded this limit in two samples (registering 13.32% and 12.64%). Brand A showed a discrepancy among the deglazed weight of each sample (11.43%, 8.17%, 6.54%), suggesting a lack of standardization and self-regulation in the glazing process of the company. Brand B had a large amount of ice patches on the surface of the fillets, raising suspicions of excessive water addition during the process. Despite exceeding the glazing limit in brand B, the net weight indicated on the packaging was consistent with the deglazed weight, ruling out economic fraud. However, one of the samples in brand A and one in C showed differences between the deglazed weight and the one indicated on the packaging label (770.7g and 800g respectively in brand A; 496.4g and 500g respectively in brand C), going against the relevant legislation Portaria INMETRO no. 227/21, and indicating possible fraud and consumer relations crime. Given the concern for product safety and public health, such practices may impact the goods' nutritional quality, thereby jeopardizing the consumer well-being. Glazing process faults accelerate fish deterioration, heightening a microbiological contamination risk and compromising food safety. Hence, companies must rigorously monitor product packaging and weight to uphold integrity and safeguard consumer health, correcting any discrepancies to ensure market food quality and prevent collective health risks.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Evaluation, Sea food, ice, food safety, food fraud, fish

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