# 3292 Principles of brining and salting fish or shellfish

| SQA Unit Code | | H3K0 04 |
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| Level 3 | SCQF Level 6 | SCQF Credit value 3 |

**Unit Summary**
This unit is about the principles of brining and salt curing fish or shellfish in food and drink manufacture and/or supply operations. It includes an understanding of the science and technology required to brine and cure seafood to produce a finished product or raw material for further processing such as smoking. The principle of brining and salting fish or shellfish is integral to processing operations.

You will need to understand the science and technology required to brine and cure fish or shellfish to produce a finished product or raw material for further processing such as smoking.

This unit is for you if you work in food and drink manufacture and/or supply operations and need a broad understanding of brining and salting fish or shellfish to support your role.

In order to be assessed as competent you must demonstrate to your assessor that you can consistently perform to the requirements set out below. Your performance evidence must include at least one observation by your assessor.

Evidence of knowledge and understanding should be collected during observation of performance in the workplace. Where it cannot be collected by observing performance, other assessment methods should be used.

You need to know and understand:

1. how variations in typical process specifications can impact on brining operations
2. how to assess that raw material is suitable for brining or salting
3. how to prepare the facilities, tools and equipment for brining or salting
4. how raw material quality and temperature can impact on the process and how this may be monitored
5. how to assess the suitability of salt, water and other ingredients for use in brining or salting
6. how to prepare brines of different strengths and make suitable adjustments to achieve the required concentrations
7. how to measure brine strength and temperature using a variety of different methods
8. how to establish what are appropriate brining or curing times
9. how the key characteristics of brine will change during brining and what impact this will have on the finished product including concentration, temperature, purity
10. why fish/shellfish is allowed to rest after brining or salting

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11. how to assess the quality of brined or cured fish/shellfish
12. the impact of handling and storage on the condition and quality of brined or cured fish/shellfish
13. how to change the conditions during brining to solve common quality problems and their likely causes
14. the methods used to hold material in brine
15. the methods used to apply and hold dry cures
16. how flesh oil content and thickness/size impacts on brining or curing times
17. the process of osmosis and its impact on flesh during the brining/curing process
18. how to assess salt levels in processed fish/shellfish and the role this plays in ensuring food safety
19. the impact on yield of brining and curing

Evidence of performance may employ examples of the following assessment:

- observation
- written and oral questioning;
- evidence from company systems (e.g. Food Safety Management System)
- reviewing the outcomes of work
- checking any records of documents completed
- checking accounts of work that the candidate or others have written

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