



Quality fresh shrimp: extending product life span

Local shrimp from Belgium can be offered fresh for a longer period, and without using preservatives, through the use of a newly developed fresh value chain. By improving cooking and cooling procedures, Flemish fishermen have enhanced shelf life significantly, increasing the competitiveness of their small-scale coastal fisheries.



WEST FLANDERS FLAG, BELGIUM



Often hand-peeled abroad, most Belgian shrimps have undergone a long trip before returning to be sold on the local market. This requires extensive use of preservatives and sometimes freezing. Fresh, locally caught shrimps are available to consumers, but mostly in their unpeeled form and with a shelf life of just 4 days as they are traditionally cooked and cooled on-board using untreated sea water.

In Flanders, the FLAG supported a project to develop an optimised boiling and cooling process (with close control of temperature, water quality...) based on research funded under Axis 3 of the EFF. A prototype plant was built and installed on land and the new process has significantly increased the natural shelf life of fresh local shrimp. This adds value and makes them more competitive without using preservatives. In parallel, a new method of peeling shrimps, using an air blaster machine, is allowing this to be done locally, thus keeping the value chain in the community.

Results (after 2 years):

- > A prototype of a boiling and cooling plant developed and installed on land
- > Life cycle of fresh shrimp increased from 4 days to 14 days without using preservatives
- > New marketing possibilities, further from the coast

Total project cost: €231 250

EFF Axis 4: €84 406

Project promoter:

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