

Collaborative approach to industry advice on seafood smoking



Alfred Enderby Ltd

Seafish supports the training needs of the processing sector through the Seafood Training Academy.

Seafood smoking is the latest topic to be covered by Seafish, as part of a suite of seafood-specific training material. As well as a technical guide, the comprehensive pack also includes a new training DVD, the production of which has been greatly assisted by the co-operation of Alfred Enderby Ltd in Grimsby.

Alfred Enderby Ltd

Alfred Enderby is one of only a few independent family run traditional fish smoking firms left in England.

The traditional smokehouse on Fish Dock Road, with its distinctive tall chimneys, is about 100 years old. The Enderby family has been in control for two thirds of that time. George and Richard have run the business since the 1970s, having taken over from their father, Alfred, who had been running it since the war.

Although the core traditional fish smoking process that takes all night remains completely unchanged, the sourcing and supplying ends of the business have undergone great changes over time. Once reliant on Grimsby's own fishing fleet to supply their needs they now deal direct with Icelandic, Norwegian and Faroese companies for large line caught fresh haddock, and specific farms in the Shetland Islands for top quality salmon. They also buy it fresh off the market in Grimsby each morning.

Due to these sustainable sources and being able to take advantage of Grimsby's strategic position at the centre of a chilled fish distribution network Enderby's can guarantee daily supplies of freshly smoked fish to anywhere in the country, from large consignments of smoked haddock to London wholesalers, to just a few sides of smoked salmon to individual country hotels.

"Despite all the changes taking place around us we can still say we have not changed our belief that smoking fish in the proper slow traditional way ensures the fullest flavour," said Richard Enderby. "This is endorsed by The Guild of Fine Food Retailers who have recognised our commitment to quality and reliability by giving awards to our smoked haddock fillets and smoked salmon. We are also included in Rick Stein's Food Heroes and Henrietta Green's Food Lovers Britain. On the back of this success we are very happy to be featured in the new Seafish training DVD," he said.

The smoking process

At Enderby's skilled filleters fillet the whole fish by hand. The fillets, which usually weigh between 300 and 600g, are then immersed into a brine for a brief period before being put onto speats. At the



end of the working day the speats of fillets are lifted up into the smokehouse chimneys to be smoked for at least fifteen hours.

Traditional fish smoking is an overnight process. The first speats of fillets are removed from the chimneys early the next morning. This is much longer than in a mechanical kiln, which only takes a few hours and uses much less smoke, resulting in a paler, blander product.

The mixture of smoke and cold air which has passed over the fillets, means that there is little heat involved in the process. It only takes a short time for them to cool, after which they are quickly placed into interleaved shallow purpose built cartons weighing three kilos, with between six and nine fillets per box.

Rapid chilling then takes place in a freezer before dispatch. It is at this temperature that the finished product is transported, overnight to its destination, which can be anywhere across the UK and to a whole range of different outlets. Enderby products can be acquired from traditional fishmongers, catering wholesalers, and even from the internet.

Captured on film

“We are very grateful to Enderby’s for letting us have access to their processing facility,” said Lee Cooper, Seafish Training Development Team Leader. “With their support we have been able to capture the whole seafood smoking process on film.

“Collaboration like this is really important and ultimately it benefits the whole industry. We hope to work with more seafood processing companies in the future. This footage will become a key part of the Seafish Seafood Smoking training DVD,” he said.

Seafish is developing a comprehensive training pack on Seafood Smoking including a technical guide, with information on both the traditional and more modern smoking processes, a DVD and an advanced training course.

The Seafood Training Academy, is a partnership between leading seafood schools in the UK and Seafish, under the umbrella of the National Skills Academy for Food and Drink Manufacturing.

Seafish, the authority on seafood, was founded in 1981 by an act of parliament and supports the seafood industry for a sustainable, profitable future. Our services range from research and development, economic consulting, market research and training and accreditation through to account management and legislative advice for the seafood industry.

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