

# NAFDAC Canned Fish Regulations 2025

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# NAFDAC Canned Fish Regulations 2025

[ ] Commencement

In exercise of the powers conferred on the Governing Council of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control ('the Governing Council') by Section 30 of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control Act, Cap. N1, LFN, 2004 and Section 12 of the Food, Drugs and Related Products (Registration, Etc.) Act. Cap. F33. LFN, 2004 and of all the powers enabling it in that behalf, the Governing Council with the approval of the Minister makes the following Regulations: -

## Part 1 Objective and Application

### 1. Objective

The objective of these Regulations is to provide regulatory framework for the regulation of canned fish manufactured, imported, exported, advertised, sold, displayed for sale, distributed, or used in Nigeria.

### 2. Application

These Regulations shall apply to canned fish manufactured, imported, exported, advertised, sold, distributed or used in Nigeria.

## Part II Registration, Labelling, Advertisement

### 3. Registration

Canned fish shall be registered in accordance with NAFDAC Food And Related Products Registration Regulations, 2025.

### 4. Labelling

- (1) The labelling of canned fish shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Pre-Packaged Food Labelling Regulations 2022.
- (2) Pursuant to regulation 4 (1) of this regulation, the following shall apply in the labelling of canned fish;
  - (a) The label of canned fish shall not contain descriptive terms which that may be misleading or confusing.
  - (b) Where there is a pictorial representation on the label of canned fish, the product shall bear the common name appropriate to the species of the fish.
  - (c) The name of the canned fish may be qualified or accompanied by a term descriptive of the color of the product
  - (d) The name of the packing medium shall form part of the name of the food.
  - (e) Where a mixture of species of the same genus are used, they shall be indicated on the label.

- (f) Where the fish has been smoked or smoke-flavored, this information shall appear on the label in close proximity to the name.
- (g) The name of the canned fish may be qualified or accompanied by a term descriptive of the color of the product.

**5. Advertisement**

The advertisement of canned fish shall be in accordance with the Food Product Advertisement Regulations 2021.

**Part III**

**Raw Materials, Ingredients, Presentation, Processing, Packaging**

**6. Raw materials**

Canned fish shall be processed from sound fish of a quality fit for human consumption and be as prescribed in the First Schedule to these Regulations or as may be approved by the Agency.

**7. Ingredients**

- (1) The canned fish shall be presented in one of the following packing media: own juice, brine, water, edible oil, tomato sauce, curry or any other media as may be prescribed by the Agency.
- (2) The packing medium and all other ingredients used shall be of food grade quality and conform to all applicable standards.

**8. Presentation**

- (1) Presentations of canned fish shall comply with the provisions of these Regulations and shall;
  - (a) be adequately and accurately described, and not be misleading.
  - (b) not show any visible external defects.
- (2) The content of the canned fish shall not display any appreciable disintegration when opened.
- (3) The product shall have the odor, flavor and color characteristic of the fish species.
- (4) The presentations of the different types of canned fish shall be as specified in Second Schedule to these Regulations or as may be approved by the Agency.

**9. Processing**

- (1) The canned fish processor shall demonstrate by principle and practice the adoption, implementation and recording of
  - (b) Good Manufacturing Practices
  - (c) Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point program
- (2) The processing temperature and time shall ensure the proper cooking and adequate sterilization of the finished product.

**10. Packaging**

- (1) Canned fish shall be packed in suitable container, free from rust and hermetically sealed.

- (2) Can shall be lacquered, non-toxic and shall not affect the quality of the fish.
- (3) The lacquer shall not be soluble in oil or brine
- (4) The can exterior shall be free from any dents, rust, perforations and steam distortions.
- (5) The product shall be free from container integrity defects which may compromise the hermetic seal.

#### 11. **Decomposition**

Canned fish shall not contain more than 10 mg/100 g of histamine based on the average of the sample unit tested.

#### 12. **Hygiene**

Canned fish shall be free from foreign materials, micro-organism, or other materials which may impact the integrity of the product.

#### 13. **Prohibition**

A person shall not manufacture, import, export, advertise, distribute, sell or use canned fish in Nigeria except it has been registered in accordance with the provision of these Regulations.

### **Part IV** **Offences and Penalties, Forfeiture after conviction**

#### 14. **Offences and Penalties**

- (1) Any person who contravenes any of the provisions of these Regulations commits an offence and shall be liable on conviction. In case of -
  - (a) an individual, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year or to a fine not exceeding N800,000.00 or to both; and
  - (b) a body corporate, to a fine not exceeding N5,000, 000.00.
- (2) Where an offence under these Regulations is committed by a body corporate, firm or other association of individuals every: -
  - (a) director, manager, secretary or other similar officer of the body corporate.
  - (b) partner or officer of the firm.
  - (c) trustee of the body concerned.
  - (d) person concerned in the management of the affairs of the association; or
  - (e) person who purports to act in a capacity referred to in paragraphs (i) to (iv) of this sub-regulation, is severally liable to be proceeded against and punished for that offence in the same manner as if he had himself committed the offence, unless he proves that the act or omission constituting the offence took place without his knowledge, consent or connivance.

#### 15. **Forfeiture after conviction**

- (1) A person convicted of an offence under these Regulations shall forfeit to the Federal Government:-
  - (a) any asset or property constituting proceeds derived from or obtained, directly or indirectly, as a result of the offence; and

- (b) any of the person's property or instruments used in any manner to commit or to facilitate the commission of the offence.
- (2) In this section, "proceeds" means any property derived or obtained, directly or indirectly, through the commission of the offence.

**Part V**  
**Miscellaneous**

**16. Interpretation**

In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:

**Brine** means a solution of salt in water;

**Canned fish** means commercially sterile fish in hermetically sealed containers;

**Decomposition** means the deterioration of fish and their products including texture breakdown and causing a persistent and distinct objectionable odor or flavor.

**Hermetically sealed containers** mean containers sealed to protect the contents against the entry of micro-organisms during and after heat treatment

**Histamine** means a biogenic amine endogenous in human tissue and is released in response to a variety of immunologic and non-immunologic signals.

**Lacquered** means a range of clear or colored wood finishes that dry by solvent evaporation or a curing process that produces a hard, durable finish.

**Raw materials** mean fresh and frozen fish and/or their parts that may be utilized to produce fish products intended for human consumption.

**Smoking** means a process of treating fish by exposing it to smoke from smoldering wood or plant materials.

**17. Citation**

These Regulations may be cited as NAFDAC Canned Fish Regulations, 2025.

**MADE at Abuja this ..... day of .....2025**

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**Dr. Mansur Kabir**

**Chairman Governing Council**

**National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC)**

Raw materials for canned fish

S/N	Type of canned fish	Raw material
1.	Canned Mackerel	(a) <i>Scomber scombrus</i> (Atlantic mackerel) (b) <i>Scomber japonicus</i> (Chub mackerel) (c) Other species of Scomber (d) <i>Decapterus maruadsi</i> (Japanese scad) (e) <i>Rastrelliger kanagurta</i> (Indian mackerel) (f) Other species of Rastrelliger (g) <i>Cololabis saira</i> (Mackerel pike) (h) Species of Scomberomorus (i) Species of Auxis
2.	Canned sardines or sardine type products	(a) <i>Sardina pilchardus</i> (b) <i>Sardinops melanostictus</i> , <i>S. neopilchardus</i> , <i>S. ocellatus</i> , <i>S. sagax</i> , <i>S. caeruleus</i> , (c) <i>Sardinella aurita</i> , <i>S. brasiliensis</i> , <i>S. maderensis</i> , <i>S. longiceps</i> , <i>S. gibbosa</i> (d) <i>Clupea harengus</i> (e) <i>Clupea bentincki</i> (f) <i>Sprattus sprattus</i> (g) <i>Hyperlophus vittatus</i> (h) <i>Nematalosa vlaminghi</i> (i) <i>Etrumeus teres</i> (j) <i>Ethmidium maculatum</i> (k) <i>Engraulis anchoita</i> , <i>E. mordax</i> , <i>E. ringens</i> (l) <i>Opisthonema oglinum</i>
3.	Canned Tuna and Bonito	(a) <i>Euthynnus alletteratus</i> (little tunny) (b) <i>Euthynnus lineatus</i> (little tunny or black skipjack) (c) <i>Euthynnus affinis</i> (kawakawa or little tuna) (d) <i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i> (skipjack) (e) <i>Thunnus albacares</i> (yellow-fin tuna) (f) <i>Thunnus tonggol</i> or <i>Neothunnus rarus</i> (longtailed tuna or northern bluefin tuna) (g) <i>Thunnus obesus</i> (big-eyed tuna) (h) <i>Thunnus atlanticus</i> (black-fin tuna) (i) <i>Thunnus alalunga</i> (albacore) (j) <i>Thunnus maccoyii</i> (southern bluefin tuna) (k) <i>Thunnus orientalis</i> (oriental tuna) (l) <i>Thunnus thynnus</i> (bluefin tuna)

		(m) The species of fish <i>Sarda chiliensis</i> , <i>Sarda lineolata</i> or <i>Sarda sarda</i> after it has been canned, shall be designated as "Bonito" or "Bonito Tuna".
	Canned Salmon	(a) <i>Salmo salar</i> (b) <i>Oncorhynchus nerka</i> (c) <i>Oncorhynchus kisutch</i> (d) <i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i> (e) <i>Oncorhynchus gorbuscha</i> (f) <i>Oncorhynchus keta</i> (g) <i>Oncorhynchus masou</i>

## Second Schedule

### Presentation of canned fish

S/N	Type of canned fish	Presentation
1.	Canned Sardine	(1) Shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) contains at least two fish in each can</li> <li>(b) contains only one fish species</li> </ul> (2) The head and gills shall be completely removed; and scales and/or tail may be removed. (3) The fish may be eviscerated. If eviscerated, it shall be practically free from visceral parts other than roe, milt or kidney. If ungutted, it shall be practically free from undigested feed or used feed.
2.	Canned Tuna	Shall be presented as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Solid (skin-on or skinless): fish cut into transverse segments which are placed in the can with the planes of their transverse cut ends parallel to the ends of the can. The proportion of free flakes or chunks shall not exceed 18% of the drained weight of the container.</li> <li>(b) Chunk; pieces of fish most of which have dimensions of not less than 1.2 cm in each direction and in which the original muscle structure is retained. The proportion of pieces of flesh of which the dimensions are less than 1.2 cm shall not exceed 30% of the drained weight of the container.</li> <li>(c) Flake or flakes</li> </ul>



		<p>a mixture of particles and pieces of fish most of which have dimensions less than 1.2 cm in each direction but in which the muscular structure of the flesh is retained. The proportion of pieces of flesh of which the dimensions are less than 1.2 cm exceed 30% of the drained weight of the container.</p> <p>(d) Grated or shredded a mixture of particles of cooked fish that have been reduced to a uniform size, in which particles are discrete and do not comprise a paste.</p> <p>(e) Any other presentation shall be permitted provided that it is sufficiently distinctive from other forms of presentation laid down in these Regulations.</p> <p>(f) The name of the canned fish may be qualified or accompanied by a term descriptive of the color of the product, provided that the term "white" shall be used only for <i>Thunnus alalunga</i> and the terms "light", "dark" and "blend" shall be used only in accordance with any rules of the country in which the product is sold.</p> <p>(g) The term "white" shall be used only for <i>Thunnus alalunga</i> and the terms "light", "dark" and "blend" shall be used only in accordance with any rules of the country in which the product is sold.</p>
3.	Canned salmon	Shall consist of sections which are cut transversely from the fish and which are filled vertically into the can. The sections shall be packed so that the cut surfaces are approximately parallel with the ends of the container.
4.	Canned Mackerel	Shall be presented as steaks, fillets in a variety of sauces, or as a cold smoked product.