

THE HANDLING PROCESS: CATCH TO FACTORY

Prior to processing lobster go through several handling operations. Lobster are removed from the pots, sized, and the legal catch is stored in seawater holding tanks or moist conditions. Lobster are then transported, usually out of water, for 0.5 to 6 hours. Once at the factory they are weighed and sorted for size, injury and vigour; a process that involves further disturbance and handling in air. Lobster processors attribute the dead or very weak animals, commonly referred to as 'rejects', to stress during harvesting and handling.

Using AQUI-S® as soon as possible in the handling process will eliminate stress. This maximises the chances of lobster arriving at the factory in strong condition with minimal appendage and weight loss. It will increase processing options and ensure the maximum value from product is achieved.



Lobster fishing boat

HOW TO USE AQUI-S® WITH A LIVE WELL ON THE BOAT

Many lobster fishing boats employ a live well tank. The tank continually flows with water which lobster are transferred to in basket crates during fishing.

Step 1: Determine the amount of AQUI-S® required and make up as a stock solution at a 1:10 dilution.

Step 2: Once the water flow is stopped AQUI-S® can be applied to the live well tank at a concentration of 30 ppm (30 mL per 1000L of water). This means if the live well tank is 400L in volume you will need 12mL of AQUI-S®.

Step 3: While lobster are being sedated with AQUI-S® ensure dissolved oxygen levels in the water remain above 80% saturation. This can be ensured by providing auxilliary aeration in the form of a portable air blower or compressor.

Step 4: Remove lobster from the AQUI-S® solution once they have lost the reflexive tail curl but still retain turgor. This will usually take 5 to 10 minutes. Then, transfer lobster to the transport truck or holding depot as per normal.



Sedated lobster being removed from live well tank

HOW TO USE AQUI-S® WITHOUT A LIVE WELL ON THE BOAT

Some lobster fisherman do not have live well tanks fitted on their boats and instead leave lobster in baskets under damp/moist conditions. This method is less preferable as fish can become dehydrated and consequently stressed.

Step 1: Construct a portable bath on the boat and fill it with seawater. Determine the amount of AQUI-S® required and make up as a stock solution at a 1:10 dilution. AQUI-S® can be applied to the portable bath at a concentration of 30 ppm (30 mL per 1000L of water). This means if the bath is 400L in volume you will need 12mL of AQUI-S®.

Step 2: Before transporting lobster to a depot or processing factory transfer them to the AQUI-S® bath. It may be necessary to transfer lobster crates in batches depending on the bath size and number of crates containing lobster.

Step 3: Remove lobster from the AQUI-S® solution once they have lost the reflexive tail curl but still retain turgor. This will usually take 5 to 10 minutes. Then, transfer lobster to the transport truck or holding depot as per normal.



Portable AQUI-S® bath containing two crates of lobster