

SECOND EDITION OF THE NAG/USDA DOCUMENT ON “HANDLING FISH FED TO FISH-EATING ANIMALS”

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Abstract

The original USDA “Handling fish fed to fish-eating animals” document, published in 1998, has been an invaluable resource for zoos and aquariums for over 25 years and has also guided government agencies tasked with evaluating the care of wild animals in human care. However, changes in the seafood industry, advances in our understanding of food safety, and developments in our field have led to the need to update and expand the document to reflect our current knowledge.

The new document provides valuable background and guidance for the handling of fish fed to fish-eating animals in managed care. All points of fish handling are discussed, including ordering, purchasing, receiving, storage, thawing, feeding, cleaning, sanitation, validating food safety procedures, and evaluating quality and nutrient composition. Using these newly updated guidelines along with the appropriate documentation should allow institutions that feed fish-eating animals to meet or exceed current regulations and best practices.