

ANNUAL MEETING - JUNE 1955The Conversion Factor for Wet Salted Cod

The problem of what conversion factor (or factors) to use to convert the landed wet salted weight to the round fresh weight has been occupying the Commission for several years. A number of experiments carried out (mainly in 1953) by the member countries and reported to the Commission were dealt with by the Executive Secretary in his report last year (Meeting Document No. 21). Since then only a little additional material has been reported to the Secretariat.

It is clear from the 1953 work and the earlier work that the conversion factor (from wet salted to round fresh) varies, depending on (among other things): -

- (1) The size of the gonads - i.e. in particular whether the gonads are ripe, spent or immature. This will depend on whether the fish are taken before, during or after the spawning season; and on their age.
- (2) The size of the fish. (This might simply be a reflection of (1).)
- (3) The geographical area. (No doubt this would be influenced by (1) and (2).)
- (4) The position in the hold and the length of time in the hold. (There is some doubt whether the length of time in the hold after, say, one month makes any difference to the amount of weight lost.)
- (5) The technique of gutting and splitting. (There are no reports on this varying.)

There are no clear reasons as to why the conversion factor used should vary between Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Portugal or Spain. Certainly their experimental results vary, but it seems likely that this is a reflection of points 1-4 rather than any national reason (e.g. point 5).

It is proposed that the Committee on Research and Statistics decide between:

- (1) Using different conversion factors for different areas and seasons;
- (2) Using one universal conversion factor and hoping that errors will tend to cancel each other out.

If various conversion factors are to be used, it is suggested that a series of experiments be designed by the Committee on Research and Statistics to determine the conversion factor for cod from each subarea for each month (or season).

If one conversion factor is to be used, it is proposed that it be about 2.9 or 3.1. The exact value can be decided later this year. It would be possible to vary this conversion factor slightly by using a higher value during the spawning season - say 3.1, and a lower value during the remainder of the year, say 2.9.

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