

### **15A NCAC 18A .0161 CRUSTACEA COOKING**

- (a) The cooking area or room shall be under a roof located between the area for receiving raw crustacea and the air-cool room and shall be vented to assure the removal of steam.
- (b) Crustacea shall be cooked in accordance with the following:
  - (1) Crabs shall be cooked under steam pressure until the internal temperature of the center-most crab reaches 235° F (112.8° C). Temperature shall be measured with an accurate, indicating thermometer having a range of 170-270° F (77-132° C).
  - (2) Other crustacea shall be cooked until the internal temperature of the center-most crustacean reaches 180° F (83° C) and is held at this temperature for one minute. Temperature shall be measured with an accurate, indicating thermometer. Crayfish shall be culled and cleaned prior to cooking.
  - (3) Nothing in this Rule shall prohibit any other cooking process that has been found equally effective and approved by the Division of Marine Fisheries.
- (c) The retort shall be constructed to permit a working pressure of at least 20 pounds per square inch (psig). Steam inlet and venting shall provide a uniform and complete distribution of steam. Venting shall be sufficient to permit complete elimination of air from the retort. Drains and vents shall be located at least two feet above mean high tide.
- (d) The retorts shall be equipped with:
  - (1) an accurate, indicating thermometer with a range that will include 170-270° F (77-132° C) and located with the sensor extending into the heat chamber;
  - (2) an operating pressure indicator, at least three inches in diameter, with a 0-30 psig range and located adjacent to the indicating thermometer; and
  - (3) a safety valve operational at 18-30 psig, located in the upper portion of the retort, protected from tampering, and designed to prevent injury to the operator.
- (e) The boiler shall be of such capacity as to maintain 45 to 100 psig during cooking. The steam line from the boiler to the retort shall be at least one and one-fourth inch inside diameter.
- (f) Overhead hoists shall be equipped with chain bags or other means of preventing foreign material from falling onto the cooked product.
- (g) Retort cooking baskets shall be of stainless steel or equally impervious, non-corrosive material, and shall be designed to allow for equal steam disbursement, ease of handling, dumping, and cleaning.
- (h) All construction or replacement of retorts after October 1, 1992 shall be "flow-through" type and open directly into the air-cool room or a protected passageway into the air-cool room.
- (i) All construction of new or replacement retorts shall require a Process Validation Study Report approved by the Division prior to use based upon documentation of the ability to produce time-temperature results as required by the rules of this Section.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-182; 113-221.2; 143B-289.52;  
Eff. October 1, 1992;  
Readopted Eff. April 1, 2022.*