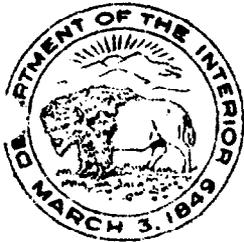


*Office file  
2/6/56*



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1956

FISH PORTION STUDY MAY BE PRELUDE TO NEW PACKAGE PLAN

A standard portion of fish or shellfish, individually wrapped in cellophane at a carefully inspected processing plant and placed before him virtually "untouched by human hands," may be in the offing for the patron of public eating places, advises the Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Service has surveyed 4,500 restaurants in the course of a research project with one of its objectives being to determine "how much fish is a portion", which in turn may be the basis for some major changes in the processing of seafood for restaurant use, John L. Farley, Service Director, said today. Mr. Farley added that it was entirely possible that some of the packaging changes which might come as a result of the study will be carried through to the product offered for sale to the housewife.

This study is of particular interest to the restaurants because of the increasing demand for seafood in the public eating places of the Nation and because restaurants seem to be incurring losses in time and product because of "guess-cutting" by kitchen help who in many cases have not had opportunity to become adept in the particular job of slicing fish.

This study of the restaurants and other public eating places indicates that there is a wide variance as to what constitutes a "portion" of fish but that the most frequent size of serving in restaurants is about five ounces per person or about three servings to a pound of fish. A very few of the restaurants indicate that they serve a full pound per person. Then there are others who state that they serve six portions to a pound. Approximately one third of them serve three. Another third is about equally divided between serving two or four from the pound.

The research is sponsored by the Fish and Wildlife Service with funds made available by the Saltonstall-Kennedy Act which was passed to help domestic fisheries market their products. The Service has contracted with the Bureau of the Census for the survey. Once the necessary information is collected and compiled by the Fish and Wildlife Service, it is then turned over to the industry for its use.

One of the probable results may be a more complete job of processing and packaging in the processing plants of the country. This will consist of determining what the trade decides, on the basis of available information, to be a proper portion per serving and to do the packaging accordingly. Arguments for this type of merchandising are that it will save the restaurant operator time and trouble and insure the customer a portion of seafood which has had no chance of becoming contaminated between the processing plant and place of serving. It is also considered possible that the "portion" idea may be followed in retail fish packages to permit a selection of package based upon the size of the family.

x x x