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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FIRST UNITED STATES STANDARD FOR FISHERY PRODUCTS ESTABLISHED

Through the combined efforts of the commercial fishing industry, the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, quality standards that have proved so valuable as a marketing aid for agricultural products will soon become available for fish and fishery products, Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton announced today.

At the expiration of the 60-day period allowed for comments by the public, official notice of final rule making for voluntary United States standards for frozen fried fish sticks were published in the Federal Register of July 21, 1956. On August 21, 1956, 30 days after the final publication, the standards will become effective.

Funds made available by Public Law 466, 83d Congress, commonly referred to as the Saltonstall-Kennedy Act, have been used to expedite the program of the Fish and Wildlife Service for the development of voluntary Federal standards. A committee of industry technologists, representative of fish-stick producers and distributors, actively cooperated with the Service's scientific staff in the studies of frozen fried fish sticks (selected as the product of highest priority by the fishing industry) and of processing procedures required to insure development of a realistic and practical standard.

The Department of the Interior has developed the standards program for fish and fishery products and conducted all research, conferences, and meetings required to develop or revise the standards. When the standards become effective, the Department of Agriculture will offer an inspection and certification service on a fee basis upon request by any financially interested party. Such inspections will aid in quality control and in facilitating marketing of the products.

The standard for frozen fired fish sticks applies to whole, rectangular-shaped portions of fish flesh, breaded, precooked, and frozen. The grades include

"U. S. Grade A" and "U. S. Grade B." Quality below these grades would be classified as "Substandard."

Products to be graded must conform to the industry-accepted definition of the product. The most important elements of the definition require that only one species of fish be used in a package, that the fish flesh be composed of fillet portions, and that the product consist of at least 60 percent by weight of fish flesh.

The standard does not define proper labeling nomenclature for this product. Frozen fried fish sticks when sold in interstate commerce must conform to the labeling regulations of the Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Copies of the standard will be made available by the Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington 25, D. C., upon written request.

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