

Information sheet on quality labelled Skrei



The purpose of this document is to inform buyers of quality labelled Skrei about important quality requirements for Skrei carrying the quality label.

It is important for buyers to know that special requirements exist for Skrei that are associated with the quality label and that all links in the value chain are responsible for guaranteeing the quality of the product until it reaches the consumer.

What is quality labelled Skrei?

Quality-labelled Skrei is sexually mature Skrei that has been selected, processed, and packaged in accordance with a specific quality standard defined for Skrei: NS 9406:2022

The standard aims to contribute to the high and consistent quality of fresh Skrei and Skrei products. Extra efforts are made to ensure the quality of this fish. Only Skrei that fulfils the requirements of the standard may be sold as quality labelled Skrei. The Norwegian Seafood Council owns the trademark and markets, manages and safeguards the product through a quality labelling scheme.

Criteria for quality labelled Skrei

Only sexually mature Northeast Arctic Cod (*Gadus morhua*) may bear the Skrei quality label. The fish must have a minimum weight of 2 kg headed and gutted, be non-fed and wild caught from 1. January to 30. April in the natural spawning areas for Skrei within the Norwegian economic zone.

Quality-labelled Skrei must also:

- be drained of blood by being bled alive, ensuring that the meat is white.
- be gutted with or without the head.
- have a smooth and fine neck cut and straight abdominal cut.
- have all guts and remaining blood removed.
- be unblemished with an even skin color, without any patches caused by contact with ice or equipment and without any crush injuries or other visible imperfections.
- have no visible parasites.
- have sufficient quality for a 12-day shelf life after packaging. Must be labelled with a maximum shelf life of 12 days from the packaging date.

Quality-labelled Skrei fillet products:

- must be produced from sexually mature Skrei with a minimum weight of 2 kg headed and gutted.
- covers the following fresh products: Skrei whole fillet, loins and tails. Skrei loins and tails must weigh at least 125 grams.
- may be with or without skin.

- must have white meat without any blood spots or bruising.
- must have firm meat.
- may not have any visible parasites.
- must be refrigerated at below 2°C throughout the entire value chain.
- have sufficient quality for a 12-day shelf life after the catch date. Must be labelled with a maximum shelf life of 12 days from the catch date.

Packing criteria (including packaging and labelling)

Only approved packaging may be used for food products. The packaging facility must be approved by the Norwegian Food Safety Authority and have an approved monitoring system in accordance with the Quality regulations for fish and fish products.

- The packaging and filleting facility must have entered into a license agreement with the Seafood Council.
- The fish must be packed within 12 hours of being caught.
- The fish must be labeled individually with the Skrei quality mark. Exceptions to the rule can be applied for at The Norwegian seafood Council
- Fillets with skin can be quality-labelled for Skrei.
- The packaging must be quality-labelled for Skrei.
- The final 'best before' date, the packaging facility's packing number and the exporter's Skrei number must be clearly shown on the package label.

Monitoring and sanctions

The monitoring of quality-labelled products and enforcement of the scheme is carried out by an independent third-party certification agency called the 'Skrei Patrol' (Skreipatroljen). The Skrei Patrol comprises inspectors from Norwegian Fishermen's Sales Organization. In the event of a serious violation of the requirements of the quality standard or license agreement, the licensee loses the right to use the quality label for a specific period and, in the event of repeated violations, for the rest of the season.

For more information on the Skrei quality label, see www.seafood.no

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