



LEIRVÍK'S DELICIOUS FISH SAUSAGES

MARIA OLSEN

In a joint venture with greater silver smelt and saithe processor Tavan, health-food startup JetFood introduces a series of fish sausage products made of silver smelt mince—sliced, vacuum sealed and branded in accordance with client specifications.

WELL IN LINE WITH global consumer trends toward healthier lifestyles, Leirvík startup JetFood has opened a fish sausage production facility in cooperation with fish processor Tavan and a Scandinavian shrink wrapping service, offering a new sausage concept based on greater silver smelt (argentine/silver herring).

With Tavan's fifteen years of experience in processing silver smelt and saithe (pollock/coley), JetFood is likely to have found an ideal business partner. Renting out offices and production premises to the new enterprise, while investing as a 50-percent shareholder in the venture,

Tavan can supply sufficient quantities of first class silver smelt mince—at least for the first few years—as it can capitalize on the future success of the partnership.

“Silver smelt is an excellent species for fish sausage production,” said JetFood managing director Jan E. Petersen. “It has a special consistency to it, which makes it particularly fitted for sausage



content. Tavan has worked extensively with process development for well over a decade and they have perfected the silver smelt grinding process, which is of great advantage for us.”

A pioneer and the leading purchaser and processor of silver smelt in the Faroe Islands, Tavan since the early 1990s has served the Faroe home market with portions of ground silver smelt. The product soon became popular with many households not least because of the consistency of the mince, with minimal need for additives, making it perfectly fit to replace whitefish in the traditional Faroese specialty of home made fish quenelles.

Likewise a leader in saithe processing, Tavan since the late 1990s has exported portions of saithe to markets in Continental Europe, mostly Germany and France.

“There are interesting synergies between saithe and silver smelt,” said Joen Magnus Rasmussen, managing director of Tavan. “We have invested on a continuous basis in product and process development with regard to both species. Since we started processing saithe, our business operations have expanded beyond the silver smelt season, which means we process fish year-round. Whereas development of saithe portions has been ongoing and will probably continue as such, grinding has been the sole method of production for silver smelt inasmuch as effective pin bone removal presents a challenge that hasn't been overcome yet; however, I believe we will get there before too long.”

He added: “With JetFood, we have found a fresh new way of marketing silver smelt mince. The fish sausage concept is very appealing and we are optimistic in regard of the prospects, not least when it comes to exports.”

With the JetFood line of fish sausages, food is offered essentially ready for the eating, which means rigorous hygiene requirements have to be met in order to receive authorization from the government's Food, Veterinary and Environmental Agency (HFS) as well as from client-side inspection bodies. “We have the relevant licenses from the Faroese authorities and we strive to meet the highest standards in hygiene and working environment,” Mr Petersen noted.

JetFood partners Eli Eltör, left, and Jan E. Petersen, managing director, demonstrating whole fish sausages with curry, garlic and barbecue flavors (center); frozen loins of saithe from Tavan (left); packing of saithe products before shipment (top right); processing of saithe (right).



Shipped from JetFood's facility as heat treated, vacuum cased, whole sausages made of silver smelt with additives that consist mainly of gluten-free flour and spices, the sausages are then sliced and consumer packed in Denmark and branded in the name of JetFood or the client.

“Our clients are food distributors and retailers,” Mr Petersen remarked. “They get the fish sausages according to their specifications, in our name or their own, sliced thin and shrink wrapped or otherwise. We have a production capacity that is scaled for supplying more than the Faroese market, and with our excellent access to raw material, we're able to take on large orders.”

As to the home market, JetFood has teamed up with wholesaler PM Group (Poul Michelsen), a well-established distributor of foods in the Faroes. Bearing in mind the growing demand for seafood on a worldwide base, the JetFood fish sausages could be poised for fast growth



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Tavan: Processor and exporter of seafood products, fresh and frozen. Specializing in minced greater silver smelt (argentine/silver herring) and loins of saithe (pollock/coley).

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JetFood: Processor and exporter of fish sausage products made of silver smelt. Slicing and packing according to agreement.

Managing Director: Jan E. Petersen

in the marketplace. As the fish sausages are likewise edible for gluten allergic consumers, the chances of finding a narrow niche won't appear slim either.

“Our fish sausages have been received with enthusiasm in test markets as a tasty, nutritional, healthy food,” Mr Petersen said.

“We emphasize the health factor very strongly, and there are no bad additives, only gluten-free flour and spices. This is protein-rich, non-fat, high energy food whose only fat is fish oil and small amounts of vegetable oil.

“You should try it!”