

Alive and kicking

Transport of live mud crabs to wholesalers and retailers

The Queensland Government has developed best practice guidelines for the handling and storage of mud crabs from harvest to table. These guidelines were developed as a way to reduce the stress levels of muddies, decrease mortality after harvest and to increase the eating quality of the catch.

This fact sheet provides key information on **packing** and **transporting** live mud crabs to wholesalers, distributors and retailers.

Packing crabs

- Cool crabs to 18-25°C if possible prior to packaging.
- Provide air holes in eskies/boxes (2 in winter or dry season, 4 in summer or wet season). If refrigerated transport is less than 15°C, reduce the number of air holes.
- Line bottom of eskies/boxes with damp old newspaper (fresh newsprint can be toxic). Consider also using styrofoam packing material for very rough situations.
- Use dry old newspaper for middle and top layers (damp newspaper can smother them).
- Discard weak crabs - badly damaged, very slow or frothing crabs should be killed and cooked. These crabs will not survive further transportation.
- Sort separate grades into separate eskies/boxes.
- Soldier pack with largest crabs on bottom layer.
- Mark eskies/boxes with:
 - Live Product
 - Fragile
 - This Way Up
 - Keep Cool but **NOT** Refrigerated
 - Provide traceability of product – state of origin at least



Transporting crabs

- Keep temperature constant. Avoid large changes in temperature (no more than 10°C either way).
- Handle gently - disturb as little as possible.
- Avoid exposure to sunlight and breeze.
- Transport vehicle cargo area should be cooled at 18°C to 25°C.
- Use direct air freight when ever possible.

More information

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