

# CRUSTACEANS

This flyer provides advice on preparing crustaceans for consumption in the home.

## Acceptable methods

Crustaceans must be chilled to the point of insensitivity (unconsciousness) prior to being killed.

Air chilling is the recommended method:

1. Crustaceans should be stored (covered in damp paper) in the vegetable chiller section of a refrigerator at approximately 5°C, both for food safety reasons and for the welfare of the animal.
2. Move the crustacean into the freezer section (-10°C to -18°C) of the refrigerator and leave for approximately 45 minutes, long enough for it to become unconscious but not frozen.
3. Remove the crustacean from the freezer, check to ensure it is unconscious. Signs of unconsciousness include:
  - no resistance to handling, eg there is no resistance to the movement of the tail or abdomen
  - no control of limb movement
  - no eye reactions when shells are tapped
  - no reaction to touching around the mouth.

For the preparation of boiled lobster or crab, the chilled crustaceans can then be placed into a large pot of rapidly boiling water.

## Unacceptable methods

Any other methods of preparing crustaceans for consumption are considered unacceptable and should not be used.

These include:

- killing crustaceans by boiling without the prior chilling of the animal to a state of unconsciousness
- separating the head from the tail (transverse sectioning) of live lobsters, prior to or part way through the acceptable methods of killing described in this flyer
- cutting crabs into sections without first disconnecting the brain (front and rear nerve centres)
- serving crustaceans live to diners.

## Further information

Advice on the humane killing of crustaceans has been prepared by the ACT Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC).

If you have any questions about this information, please contact Canberra Connect on 13 22 81.

