



The Fish People

# WHAT MAKES A PREMIUM GRADE Swai PREMIUM?



The growth in production of swai and its widening use in the USA has caused an expansion in the availability of various specifications and levels of "value". Swai has achieved the 6th spot on the Top 10 most consumed seafoods in the U.S., but not all Swai are farmed and processed equally.

The solution for many buyers is to carefully look at brands and the companies that manage consistent production. Through careful selection of brand, a buyer can achieve consistency and avoid customer complaints.



## Color

Swai flesh can range from bright white, off white, light pink, dark pink, and even yellowish. The color of the swai is determined by the overall health of the live fish. Swai is sensitive to build-ups of ammonia and nitrites in the grow-out environment. Excessive levels of these compounds can retard the function of the pituitary systems of the fish. The result is various meat colors. Premium swai is considered to have a creamy white to very slight pink coloration. Swai that has a brilliant white or unnaturally white flesh color could have been treated with whitening agents in the factory during production.

► **Basa Prima** Swai has a creamy white to very slight pink coloration, because our fish are grown in an environment with continually changed fresh water to avoid ammonia and nitrate buildups, resulting in robust and healthy fish.

## Trimming

As swai entered the USA market, the processors strove to give it every opportunity to succeed by giving the final product a premium presentation. With all of the bloodline removed and belly fully trimmed, the swai appealed to the buyers that were accustomed to that specification. As the swai market develops and becomes more price competitive, processors will sometimes leave partial or full bloodline and belly on the fillets to increase yield and reduce cost. Swai has one unique issue in the belly fat of the fillet in that when exposed to direct heat during cooking, it can cause an off-flavor sometimes described as "eggy". This can be very unappealing to the consumer.

► **Basa Prima** Swai helps buyers to avoid the risk of upsetting customers with off-flavor and poor appearance by providing them with consistent and reliable trim standards.

## Moisture Specification

One of the most important factors in swai quality is the amount of moisture addition to the fish during processing, as STPP solutions can enhance the final swai products. A proper use of STPP solution will result in a premium swai with an optimized moist texture and palatable profile during final preparation. Some facilities may use excessive amounts of additives to reduce the cost to the processor by diluting fillets with added moisture. This negatively affects the value of the swai. Most importantly, too high of an addition of STPP can cause the product to be undesirable in final preparations. It may become difficult to cook, maintaining a raw appearance. It may be rubbery and have off-tastes.

► **Basa Prima** Swai offers a very strict and consistent moisture spec, using the bare minimum level of STPP. This is done for the sole purpose of retaining the natural moisture level upon thawing and cooking.

**Rely On Basa Prima<sup>TM</sup> For Premium Grade Swai!**

by Western Edge SEAFOOD<sup>TM</sup>

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