



Summary

Fish is found abundantly in all natural waters. It is a valuable source of food and has been used by man from antiquity. Fish belongs to cold-blooded animals, having fins and a backbone. Most fishes have scales and breathe with gills. It is estimated that there are about 25,000 species of fishes living today, varying in size from very small fish to very large sharks. About 250 different species of fishes are used for edible purposes. Fish is a good source of protein and unlike fatty meat products; it is not high in saturated fat. It is a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, which promotes heart health. It is recommended that fish should be eaten at least twice a week. As fish is a highly perishable commodity, various methods have been devised to preserve it. They are designed to inhibit the activity of spoilage bacteria and the metabolic changes that result in the loss of fish quality. Ancient methods of preserving fish included drying, salting, pickling and smoking. All of these techniques are still used today but the more modern techniques of freezing and canning have taken on a large importance.

