



**November, 2024**

**Position Paper – “Degrees of Change“**

The current global standard for storing frozen food storage is minus 18°C/0°F and has been at this level for 100 years with little challenge.

In 2022 the International Frozen Food Network (IFFN) started discussion about the possibility of increasing this temperature and floated the idea at the International Frozen Food Conference at Anuga in 2023.

That year Nomad Foods, as first frozen food producer, started an 18-month study, in partnership with food science organisation Campden BRI, examining the effects of storing frozen food at various temperatures on product safety, texture, and nutritional value. The study found no significant changes in food quality or safety at -15°C. However, more research is needed to fully understand the impact on delicate food items such as soft fruits, herbs, and specialty ice creams, which are likely to be more sensitive to temperature changes.

Any small change in temperature that has the potential to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions without compromising food safety of frozen foods would be an exciting development and, in the current climate, the industry has a moral obligation to look at what is possible.

At the same time, there is an exciting opportunity to boost the quality of frozen foods by decreasing temperature fluctuations. Considering the advances in technology and practices since the original set temperature was established, it is today a legitimate approach to consider new modes of operation that will be more responsive to the challenges of climate change while also enhancing the quality of frozen foods while they travel across domestic and global distribution channels.

Today, regulations in some countries (i.e. EU) do not permit deviations from the prescribed frozen storage temperature of minus 18°C/0°F. Regulations in other countries (i.e. U.S. and U.K.) are less prescriptive, yet food safety must always be maintained. Regulatory harmonization is necessary to fully take advantage of changes to the average storage temperature of frozen foods.



Regulatory authorities and producing companies will both demand data to support and guide storage temperature changes in the future.

There is strong support for more data collection to understand the benefits and potential risks of modifying the average storage temperature of frozen foods. Collecting this data will take the cooperation of many companies and organizations in the frozen food industry, including producers and our logistics and cold chain partners. The organizations in the International Frozen Food Network look forward to collaborating to provide the frozen supply chain stakeholders with the information they need to make decisions about the storage temperature of frozen foods to optimize energy use, reduce GHG emissions, maintain safety and enhance quality.

We view this as a long-term process that involves all sector stakeholders and political decision-makers in our respective countries, aiming to achieve sustainable changes. By fostering national and international consensus within the frozen food industry and the whole frozen food supply chain, it is possible to influence political initiatives through frozen food associations. This collaborative effort is essential for advancing the discourse on sustainable practices in the frozen food industry and advocating for legal adjustments that support sustainability and climate protection objectives.

Even if research results in just an increase of just 1° or remains at -18°C / 0°F with other efficiencies identified, 100 years of frozen food marks a pivotal moment to reconsider how we store frozen food and its impact on the environment.



The organizations that are part of the International Frozen Food Network are:



The American Frozen Food Institute (**AFFI**) is the trade association representing the frozen food industry in the U.S. marketplace.



The Food Industries Association of Austria (**FIAA**) is by federal legislation, the only legal representation of the entire Austrian food industry sector. Frozen food industry is one of more than 30 sectors organised within FIAA.



The British Frozen Food Federation (**BFFF**) is the trade body representing the industry across the UK.



The German Frozen Food Institute (**dti**) is the association and communication platform of the frozen food industry in Germany and represents around 150 predominantly medium-sized companies from all parts of the frozen food chain, from industry to logistics and trade.



**Frozen Spain** is the association that represents the manufacturers and distributors of frozen products in the Spanish market.



The French Federation of Preserved Food Industries (**FIAC**) brings together companies of all sizes and statuses manufacturing preserved foods (canned, semi-preserved, dehydrated and frozen).



**UNAS** represents the Frozen Foods firms that join the Italian SME association UnionAlimentari-Confapi (Italian Confederation of Small and Medium Size Food Manufacturers).



The Dutch VriesVers Platform (VVP) is the knowledge and networking platform of the fresh-frozen category. The association facilitates the connection between members and specialists to share knowledge and inspire each other to make and keep the category future-oriented.