

# CHEMICAL AND NUTRITIONAL COMPOSITION OF PANGASIOUS (*Pangasius hypophthalmus*) FILLETS

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*Pangasius* (*Pangasius hypophthalmus*) is a catfish farmed in the south-east Asia and marketed all over the world as frozen or thawed fillet. A huge amount of this product is imported to Europe. *Pangasius hypophthalmus* has good marketing value in Italy and it is rather appreciated by consumers due to its low cost and low lipid content. Beside these benefits, few information about the real conditions of farming and the nutritional properties of its meat is available. The aim of the present research was to investigate the chemical and nutritional characteristics of pangasius in order to provide a better information to the consumer. For this aim 72 samples of pangasius fillets (average weight  $218.6 \pm 48.1$  g) collected from the Fish Market of Milan and local retailers were analyzed for their proximate composition and fatty acid profile. Results showed that fillets were characterized by a high moisture ( $84.5 \pm 2.2\%$ ) and a low protein ( $12.6 \pm 2.2\%$ ) and lipid ( $1.4 \pm 0.7\%$ ) content. Moreover, the intramuscular lipids were characterized by a high percentage of saturated ( $43.0 \pm 2.1\%$ ) and monounsaturated ( $38.8 \pm 3.4\%$ ) fatty acids, and by a low percentage of polyunsaturated ( $18.2 \pm 4.5\%$ ) fatty acids. Among polyunsaturated, linoleic acid (18:2n-6) was the most representative fatty acid with a percentage of  $8.9 \pm 1.6\%$ . The chemical and nutritional properties of pangasius fillets differed from those of other farmed fish species, especially for their high level of saturated fatty acid and low content of the n-3 fatty acids ( $4.0 \pm 1.8\%$ ).

**Keywords:** pangasius, chemical composition, fatty acid