**Main characteristics/features**

Ha Long fried calamari are light yellow in colour. They are salty and naturally sweet. During the processing stage they seldom need to be supplied with food additives (e.g. salt, monosodium glutamate).

Organoleptic properties: salty, naturally sweet, crispy, crunchy, chewy, not porous.

Flavour: typical flavour.

Shape: rounded.

Average thickness (cm): 0.9—1.16.

Average diameter (cm): 5.1—5.6.

**Geographical area**

The Ha Long fried calamari production area is located in Ha Long City in Quang Ninh province, Vietnam.

**Production/processing**

The origin of the raw material: ≥ 70% cuttlefish caught from the Gulf of Tonkin.

Species: 100% cuttlefish; fishing season: January to March; freezing: in bags for a period of 5—7 days (-25°C to -15°C) before storing in a cabinet at a constant temperature.

The cuttlefish are crushed by hand using a stone pestle and mortar or a grinding machine. They are then fried in a pan at a controlled temperature. The finished products are put on stainless steel shelves to remove the excess fat and for cooling.

**Link between product and territory**

In the Gulf of Tonkin, the surface salinity is lower and more stable than on the Central Coast, therefore the cuttlefish in the Gulf of Tonkin have a 15—21% lower salt concentration compared to elsewhere. The Gulf of Tonkin receives a large amount of fresh water from rivers with plankton species rich in inorganic and organic matter, which is an excellent food supply for cuttlefish. The amount of essential amino acids found in cuttlefish from the Gulf of Tonkin is 6—36% higher than that found in cuttlefish from the Central Coast.