

Nairagi

striped marlin (*Tetrapturus audax*)



Striped marlin is commonly known as **nairagi** and *a`u*, the Hawaiian name applied to all marlin species caught in Hawaii. Nairagi are usually between 40 and 100 pounds in round weight and are rarely over 130 pounds. The *nairagi* has the most slender bill and the most visible “stripes” in the marlin family. This species is also distinguished by the high, pointed dorsal fin (higher than the greatest depth of the body) and more compressed sides than other species of marlin.

Seasonality and How They Are Caught

Availability and Seasonality:

Commercial landings of nairagi are year round in Hawaii but are heaviest during the winter and spring

(November-June) and are lightest during the summer.

The 40 to 60 pound fish which appear in the spring season of some years are migrating through the Hawaiian Island chain, passing through the islands again in the winter with added weight.

Fishing Methods:

Most of the *nairagi* catch in Hawaii is landed by longline boats fishing in the open ocean. However, *nairagi* may be caught near shore by slow trolling with live bait or lures during certain times of the year.

Distribution:

The longline catch of nairagi is marketed primarily through the Honolulu fish auction, where it is sold fresh.

Color, Taste, Texture:

Nairagi is considered the finest-eating of all marlin species because of its tender flesh. The natural color varies from light pink to deep orange-red. The less common *nairagi* that have an intense orange-red flesh and higher fat content are particularly desired for the *sashimi* market.

Preparations:

Nairagi is frequently used in raw fish preparations as *poke*, *sashimi* or *carpaccio* or is cooked in the same manner as tuna and swordfish. The flesh of all marlin species is ideal for grilling, but the more tender *nairagi* can also be used in cold seafood dishes and salads.



Nairagi is popular for gourmet smoked fish products, but high prices usually direct this fish to other uses.

Quality

Although some longline boats that catch *nairagi* remain at sea for up to 12-16 days, with proper care, the fish will retain a high quality for up to three weeks after capture.

Product Forms and Yields:

Fresh *nairagi* is sold whole, dressed (headed & gutted), or filleted for local sale and for mainland markets. Up to 65% of the whole fish weight can be recovered as fillet



Hawaii Seafood Council

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