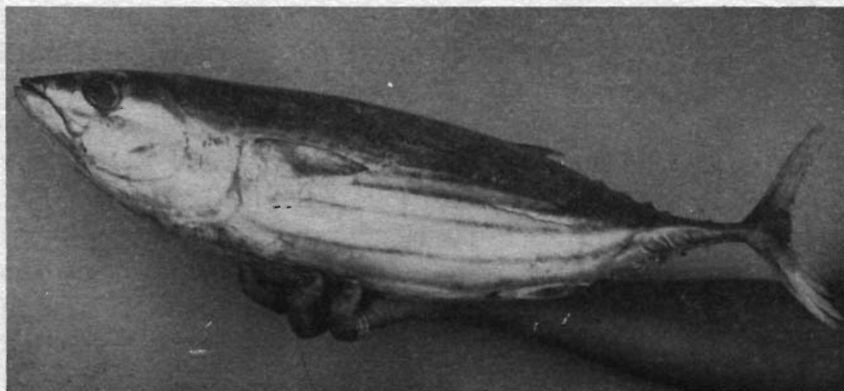




# AKU





In the summer...

AKU is in plentiful supply on the market, the quality of the product is therefore good, and the price (when supply is abundant) is lower than at other times of the year.

AKU (KATSUWONUS Pelamis) is also commonly known as Skipjack, Striped Tuna, Oceanic Skipjack, and Katsuwo. It is a small tuna.

The tunas and mackerels belong to the same fish family. The tunas include Aku, Kawakawa (Little Tuna, Black Skipjack, or Bonito), and Ahipahala (Albacore or Tongo). Tunas and mackerels are fish of the open seas. The true mackerel thrives in temperate waters. Tunas are usually found in tropical and subtropical waters.



A constant fresh market supply, the relatively low cost, and the high food value of Aku are good reasons for consumers in Hawaii to use this fish for satisfying family meals. Aku is high in protein, low in fat and calories, and a good source of niacin, one of the vitamins in the B group which helps the body use

carbohydrates. About a 3-1/2-ounce serving of Aku provides approximately one-third of the day's protein requirement of a man or a woman.

THE GOOD AND CONSTANT supply of fresh Aku in the market is reflected in favorable price to the buyer. For the past few years, Aku has headed the list of commercial catch in pounds and value. In 1964, about 9 million pounds, valued at a little over \$1 million was caught in Hawaiian waters. The total sea landing of all species combined was over 2-1/2 million pounds, valued at close to \$3 million. The Aku catch, then, was nearly 72 percent of the total Hawaiian sea catch for the year.

DURING THE SUMMER months, the supply of Aku in the market hits a peak, resulting in lower-than-normal prices. Schools of larger fish, averaging between 18 and 22 pounds (2 or more years old), are caught in Hawaiian waters in the summer. The consumer thus has the advantage of a lower price. Also, she can rely on a more stable market price for Aku than for other fish at this peak season. When fish supplies are unreliable, prices tend to fluctuate.

PART OF HAWAII'S AKU catch is sold fresh; most of it is sent to the cannery; and some of it is dried or smoked. Our fishery is supplied mainly by 5- to 12-pound Aku (a year or little more in age) caught other than during the peak summer season. This small Aku may be up to 40 inches long and weigh up to 50 pounds. It seems that Aku rarely lives to be over 3 years old.

AKU IS A LEAN fish. It is a high-protein, low-fat, and a low-calorie food. Aku has 25 to 38 percent protein--the highest level among Hawaii fishes analyzed in the nutrition laboratory of the Hawaii Agricultural Experiment

Station. The protein content of some Hawaii fish is greater (18 to 28 percent) than those of beef, pork, and lamb, generally reported as having between 15 and 19 percent protein. The calorie value given for Aku is 123 to 141 calories per 100 grams (approximately 3-1/2 ounces).



Aku, then, "fits the menu" for those who want a high-protein, low-calorie food. Analysis has shown that the fat content of broiled Aku is about half that of fried Aku (sautéed in a small amount of fat). Yet, the fried Aku has much less fat than the red muscle meats in their raw state.

TO SELECT FRESH AKU, look for a good general appearance--a bright color with characteristic sheen. The flesh of fresh fish is firm and elastic. It has a fresh, mild odor. In buying fresh, whole Aku, observe the eyes, which should be bright, clear, full, and bulging. The skin should be shiny and bright.

AKU IS MARKETED in Hawaii in various forms for many uses. Fresh, dried, and smoked Aku are often packaged so they may be purchased at the self-service departments of our supermarkets. Parts of, or whole Aku may be bought by weight at fish markets, other markets with fish counter service, or by requesting them at the self-service counters of supermarkets.

Some of the forms in which Aku is available in the market is shown in the table on page 4.

SERVINGS OF FISH are usually based on 1/3 to 1/2 pound of the edible flesh per person. In purchasing Aku fillet, allow 1/3 pound per person for an average serving.

Aku is a lean fish which may be prepared in several ways. Swimming does not develop tough muscles.



Hawaiian Tuna Packers Photo

Form in which Aku is sold.	Approximate weight per unit
Whole or round	
Drawn-dressed Scaled and eviscerated; head may not be removed	3 to 4 pounds
Fillet Lengthwise fillet or crosswise fillet	1 pound
Aku with backbone About 1/2 of flesh on each side of bone; width of cut is about 3 inches; used for barbecuing or for frying.	1 pound
Aku roe	
Dried Aku Salted and dried	8 ounces
Dried Aku (Katsuwobushi) Steamed or boiled and dried	
Smoked Aku	8 ounces

The fish is tender and cooks quickly. Do not over-cook. For best eating, Aku may be sautéed or cooked in a skillet with a small amount of fat; broiled with a barbecue sauce; made into a pattie or "Akuburger" and fried. A popular Japanese way of serving Aku is "Sashimi," sliced raw fish with mustard and shoyu sauce or a variation of this sauce. Aku is the preferred fish for sashimi because of the constant supply of fresh, high-quality Aku available daily in the market.

Another way of preparing Aku (Portuguese style) is to cover Aku cubes with vinegar, let it stand for 4 hours, then sauté or fry it in deep fat.

When cooked, Aku is best eaten hot and immediately after it has been prepared.





## RECIPES

### AKU SAUTÉ with HEAD CABBAGE AND SWEET PEPPER SALAD

For your next family meal, why not plan to have fish 'n salad. These dishes are quickly and easily prepared. The Head Cabbage and Sweet Pepper Salad is a good complement to Aku Sauté.

#### Aku Sauté

3 servings

1 lb. fillet of fresh Aku

Salt

Pepper

2 tablespoons flour

2 tablespoons fat

Cut fillet into 3/4-inch slices. Salt, pepper, and lightly coat slices with flour. Sauté in skillet with a small amount of fat. When Aku is done, squeeze lime or lemon juice over it and serve with shoyu sauce. Chopped parsley may be sprinkled over the fish, if desired. Aku sauté is best when eaten immediately after it is prepared.



### Head Cabbage and Sweet Pepper Salad

3 servings

1/4 lb. head cabbage, shredded (1 cup)

1/2 lb. sweet pepper, thinly sliced

2 tablespoons mayonnaise

1/2 sweet-dill pickle

1 teaspoon pickle juice

Salt

Pepper

Place the shredded cabbage and thinly sliced pepper into a bowl. Toss with mayonnaise. Add finely chopped pickles and a small amount of pickle juice, salt, and pepper. Mix lightly.

### SASHIMI with VEGETABLE GARNISH

Fresh, sliced Aku on a bed of vegetables is a favorite Sashimi dish. The sauce is usually a mustard and shoyu combination but this may be varied. Similarly the bed of vegetables may vary.

#### Sashimi (Sliced Raw Fish)

4 servings

1 lb. fillet of fresh Aku

1/2 lb. daikon

1/2 teaspoon dry mustard

1/2 teaspoon hot water

1/2 cup shoyu sauce

Remove skin and dark flesh. Cut fillet into rectangles, 1 inch thick and 2 inches wide. With a sharp, slim knife, slice fish diagonally, cutting with a single motion towards you into slices about 1/8-inch thick. Using the knife, overlap the slices of sashimi into rows and arrange them on a dish on which grated daikon has been placed as a bed or garnish. Make a paste with mustard and hot water, stirring with a chopstick as the water is added. Add shoyu and mix well. Dip sliced Aku in this sauce as it is eaten.



### Vegetable Garnish Variations

Vegetables which may be used are shredded daikon, cucumber, or carrot. A special grater on the market enables you to shred daikon, cucumbers, or carrots into long threads. A combination of vegetables may be used, such as shredded daikon and carrot, or shredded daikon mixed with slivered radishes (matchsticks). Shredded lettuce, watercress, head cabbage, shiso leaves, also make good garnish for Sashimi.

### Sauce Variations

Instead of a mustard-and-shoyu sauce, try grated ginger root and shoyu, or horseradish and shoyu.

## AKU PORTUGUESE STYLE

### Vinha D'Alhos

1 lb. fresh Aku

1 onion, sliced

1 teaspoon salt

Pepper or chili pepper

1 clove garlic, crushed

Vinegar

3 tablespoons fat

Dice Aku into bite-sized cubes. Place in bowl and add sliced onions, salt, pepper, garlic, and cover with vinegar. Let stand 4 hours or more. Sauté or fry in deep fat. Serve hot.

## AKUBURGER with TOSSED SALAD

Fish patties may be served as an entrée or used as sandwich fillings. A tossed salad of your favorite fresh vegetables is a good complement to Akuburger.



### Akuburger

3 servings

- 1 lb. Aku, chopped, ground, or scraped
- 1-1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 lb. round onion, chopped
- 1 egg
- 2 stalks of green onion, finely cut
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 tablespoons fat

Add egg to flour and beat until smooth. Add remaining ingredients, except fat. Drop by tablespoonful into skillet when the fat is hot and fry until brown and done. Akuburger may be served with shoyu sauce, lemon-shoyu sauce, or shoyu sauce mixed with finely grated daikon. The grated daikon-shoyu mixture is popular with Aku Sauté.

### Tossed Salad

- 2 cups shredded cabbage
- 2 slices radishes
- 1/2 cup watercress, cut to bite-sized pieces
- Onion slices, if desired

Salad vegetables should be cold, crisp and dry. Place vegetables in a large wooden bowl. Dress your salad as you toss it, or, if you prefer, use a pre-mixed dressing. If you dress your salad as you toss it, the following may be used as dressing:

- 4 parts oil
- 1 part vinegar
- Salt
- Pepper

Add the oil first until the leaves are delicately coated, then add the vinegar and seasonings. Dress the salad just before serving. Acid and salt cause greens to wilt and break down rapidly.

If you use a prepared dressing, be sure to shake the dressing well. Pour a little amount over greens; toss lightly with spoon and fork until all greens glisten with dressing. Taste and add more seasonings, if desired. Serve immediately.

## BROILED AKU with CABBAGE-PINEAPPLE SALAD

### Broiled Aku

3 servings

- 1 lb. fresh Aku
- 1/4 cup shoyu sauce
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 piece ginger, crushed
- 1/4 teaspoon monosodium glutamate
- 2 teaspoons salad or sesame oil

Soak Aku slices for 30 minutes in sauce made with the above ingredients. Broil and serve hot. Pickled vegetables of Wong bok (Chinese cabbage), cucumber, Japanese radish (narazuke or takuwan), and eggplant.

### Cabbage-Pineapple Salad

3 servings

- 1/4 lb. head cabbage, shredded (2 cups)
- 1/2 cup celery, if desired
- 2/3 cup fresh pineapple, diced
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise or French dressing
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon fresh pineapple juice

Mix ingredients together and serve cold.



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- (1) Gosline, William A., and Vernon E. Brock. Handbook of Hawaiian Fishes. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1960.
- (2) Walker, Mabel, Nao S. Wenkam, and Carey D. Miller. "Composition of Some Hawaii Fishes." Reprint from Hawaii Medical Journal (Nov.-Dec. 1958). University of Hawaii Agricultural Experiment Station.

The author thanks Mr. Akira Otani, Mr. George Lau, Mr. Kenji Okada, and other members of the Honolulu Fish Dealers Association for their help in obtaining information for this leaflet.

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United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating  
C. Pearra Wilson, Director, Hawaii Cooperative Extension Service  
Distributed in Furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914

LEAFLET 16 -- AUGUST 1961

Revised MARCH 1966