



Sustainability

...Understanding the Issues



Eating fish is good for you.

Eating sustainable fish is good for our planet.

But what exactly does “sustainable” mean?

It means choosing fish species that are bountiful. Sustainable fishing practices take care not to harm the fish, other marine plants and animals, nor the environment. We believe that fish you can trust begins with education. Understanding the issues affecting our seafood and the ecosystem can help you better recognize fishermen and farmers who are making responsible choices that will help protect the environment and the food supply for generations to come.

WILD CAUGHT

While it may seem that there are plenty of fish in the sea, sometimes it's a different story just below the surface. Because the oceans seem so vast and their resources limitless, these threats are often "out of sight, out of mind." But overfishing issues are not just for future generations to endure; they're very real problems affecting our current seafood supply and the health of our oceans.

Overfishing...Simply put, we're removing some fish from the ocean faster than they can reproduce. More boats on the water and more effective fishing practices have worked together over the last 60 years to shift the advantage to fishermen.

Illegal Fishing...Experts estimate that illegal, unreported or unregulated fishing—sometimes called pirate fishing—accounts for a quarter of the world's total catch of wild fish. Many fisheries that may otherwise be sustainable ignore and violate regulations, leading to overfishing.

Habitat Damage...The habitat that fish need to survive can be destroyed by some types of fishing gear, for instance when large nets or trawls are dragged along the seafloor, sweeping up everything in their paths.

Bycatch...The process of bringing a fish to market can be messy. Large nets and longlines intended for one species often catch others by mistake. Fish, sea birds, turtles and marine mammals are included in this "bycatch," and are usually thrown back dead or dying.

Management...While all of us—consumers and fishermen alike—can produce positive change, individuals can't do it all. Management agencies need to set catch limits, enforce the use of better fishing gear, and monitor illegal catches. Effective enforcement can positively impact the wellbeing of a species and the ecosystem.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE *Pacific Salmon*

Thanks to careful monitoring, Alaska salmon runs are abundant and catch has risen. Pacific salmon in Alaska are among the most intensively managed species in the world, with excellent monitoring of fish populations and the fishery itself. Alaskan fishery managers have taken the long view, limiting the entry of new fishermen and boats, and monitoring salmon populations to ensure they remain large enough to reproduce naturally. Salmon fisheries can only be opened once enough fish migrate up river to spawn. This also ensures that enough salmon make it up the watersheds to feed the wildlife and ecosystems upstream. Over time, catch has risen and salmon runs have remained abundant.

AQUACULTURE

Today, half of our seafood comes from aquaculture farms. People are raising fish, shrimp and oysters like farmers raise cattle and chickens. But the ecological impact of fish farming depends on the species chosen, where the farm is located, and how they are raised. As a society, we can create sustainable aquaculture that limits habitat damage; prevents the spread of disease and non-native species; and minimizes the use of wild fish as feed.

Wild Fish...Many of our favorite fish are themselves fish eaters.

When we farm these carnivores, we need lots of wild fish to feed them. Alternative feeds are being developed to reduce this dependence on wild fish. In addition, Some fish like catfish and tilapia can be raised on diets with very little or no fishmeal or fish oil. These alternative feeds take pressure off wild fish populations. They're good for fish farmers, too, costing much less than fish products. Shellfish (like mussels and oysters) are another good option. These animals feed by filtering particles out of the water and can be easily farmed in clean water where they collect their own food and don't require supplemental food.

Pollution & Disease...When fish are farmed in over-crowded or poorly managed open net pens, byproducts are released directly into the environment. This includes fish waste, uneaten food, disease, parasites, pesticides and antibiotics that can be harmful to the environment.

Escapes...When large numbers of fish or shrimp are kept in pens or ponds, some can escape. This isn't as harmless as you might think. Escapees can potentially breed with wild species, causing genetic changes and the possible extinction of certain populations.

Habitat Damage...Farm location is important. Rich coastal waters have been polluted by farms and hundreds of thousands of acres of coastal mangrove forests have been lost by conversion to shrimp ponds. Protecting important habitats and the species that rely on them for survival are key to sustaining the oceans.

Management...Given the rapid growth of aquaculture, careful oversight is urgent. Every country has a complex mix of farms, feeds and systems that will require innovative solutions by management agencies, lawmakers and farm managers. Examples of these issues include: decreasing dependence on wild fish and fishmeal; reducing pollution; protecting habitats; and formulating credible certification entities.

In addition to the above issues related specifically to seafood, there are general sustainable choices a seafood business can implement to make a positive impact, including practices that reduce their carbon footprint, that further social change in the community, and that create healthy work environments.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

At Euro USA, we believe in a marketplace that rewards fisheries where fish are caught and farmed responsibly. Use your buying power to select seafood that is abundant, well-managed and caught or farmed in environmentally friendly ways. Also, don't be afraid to try something new. We need to spread our consumption beyond a few popular fish. Ask for and purchase items that are sustainable choices and find a tasty, healthy, new favorite!



Contact your Sales Representative for sustainable seafood options available from Euro USA.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE *Arctic Char*

A species native to the northern regions of Europe and North America, Arctic char is in the salmon family and possesses a similar texture and flavor. Most char in the marketplace is raised on land in tank systems where the water is recirculated, thereby reducing the risk of disease transfer, pollution and escapes.

