

What you can do

If you're concerned about the fate of wild salmon and troubled by the netcage salmon farming industry, please join the David Suzuki Foundation's **AQUACULTURE RESPONSE TEAM — ART!**

As a member of ART you will receive regular email updates about important issues concerning salmon farming and wild salmon fisheries. You will also have the opportunity to raise issues with politicians by responding to Action Alerts.

To join ART email ART@davidsuzuki.org. You can also find information on our web site at www.davidsuzuki.org/Campaigns_And_Programs/Salmon_Aquaculture/. To order more brochures, please email ART@davidsuzuki.org or write to us at the address below.

The David Suzuki Foundation is a non-profit, federally registered charity. Through research, education, action and outreach, we work to reduce the human impact on the Earth and find a balance with the natural systems that sustain us.

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Why You Shouldn't Eat Farmed Salmon



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Environmental Reasons

1. Farmed salmon are grown in floating netcages and impact wild salmon and other marine species by spreading disease and parasites.
2. Farmed salmon are given antibiotics, other drugs and pesticides. The drug-laden wastes from surplus food and feces pollute the marine environment.
3. Most farmed salmon in British Columbia—about 70 percent—are alien Atlantic stocks. The United Nations says the introduction of exotic species is extremely harmful to local ecosystems and is one of the greatest threats to nature.
4. Farmed salmon escape from their netcages—often by the thousands—and can displace fragile wild stocks from their habitat.

United Nations (2001) Convention on Biological Diversity. Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice; Sixth meeting, Montreal.

Health Reasons

1. Farmed salmon are given antibiotics that are also used to treat human illness. This contributes to the dangerous increase of antibiotic-resistant disease worldwide.
2. Farmed salmon receive more antibiotics by weight than any other livestock.
3. Farmed salmon contain higher levels of unhealthy saturated fats and lower levels of beneficial omega-3 fatty acids. A U.S. Agriculture Department study found farmed Atlantic salmon contain 70 percent more fat than wild Atlantic salmon because of the high fat content in their feed.
4. Farmed Atlantic salmon contain 200 percent more fat than wild Pacific pink or chum salmon.

World Health Organization (WHO) (1999). Food Safety Issues Associated with Products From Aquaculture. WHO Technical Report #883, Geneva.

U.S. Food and Drug Administration Nutrition Database (www.fda.gov/).

The Real Story

- Myth** Farmed salmon help feed the world.
- Fact** Farmed salmon actually represent a 'net loss' of protein worldwide. Three to five kilograms of other fish are used to make the feed to produce every kilogram of farmed salmon.
- Myth** Farmed salmon help conserve threatened or endangered wild salmon stocks.
- Fact** Farmed salmon pose a threat to wild stocks because:
- Parasites and disease can pass through the netcages and contaminate wild salmon.
 - Farmed salmon have greatly reduced the price of wild salmon, forcing fishermen to increase their catch in order to make a living.
- Myth** Farmed salmon tastes just like wild salmon.
- Fact** In blind taste tests, farmed salmon loses every time. Testers—including chefs, food critics and fishermen—have judged the taste and texture of wild salmon to be far superior to farmed varieties, which are often found to be bland and mushy. Farmed salmon are also administered chemical dyes to colour their flesh an appealing salmon pink; otherwise the flesh would be grey.

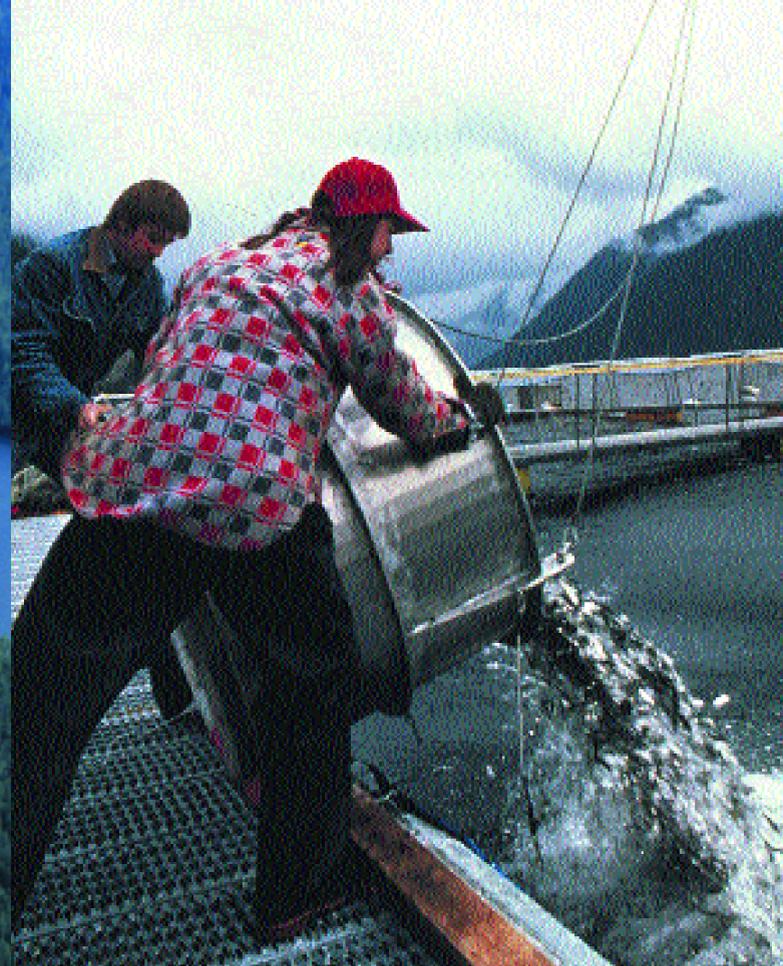
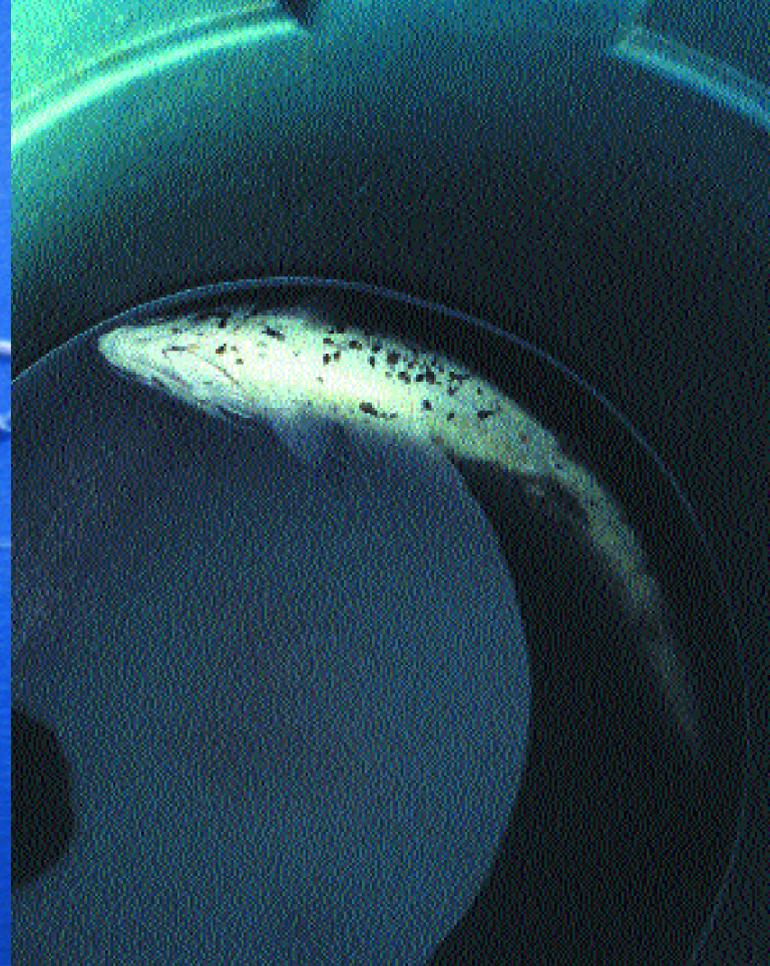
What's Wild, What's Farmed?

Whether ordering or buying salmon always ask if it's wild or farmed. If salmon is a fixed menu item it is most likely farmed. Farmed salmon is often marketed as 'fresh', especially when wild salmon is not in season.

Some types of wild Pacific salmon are not farmed so ask restaurants and stores to carry these:

Sockeye **Chum** **Pink**

Canned salmon is also wild because the mushy consistency of farmed varieties makes them difficult to can. Some varieties of salmon pate, however, are made from farmed salmon and usually sold at exorbitant prices.



Cover and Human Health photos © Natalie Forbes

Salmon Farming in Canada

On the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, netcage salmon farming began in the 1970s. These privately run floating feedlots use publicly owned coastal waters to earn profits while at the same time polluting the water. On land, this kind of corporate behaviour is restricted.

Governments hoping for new economic opportunities for coastal communities have encouraged the industry, offering subsidies and grants. The federal and provincial governments, however, do not provide any analysis comparing the benefits of salmon farming to the environmental, social and economic costs borne by other industries like commercial fisheries and tourism.

Ellis, D. and Associates. (1996). "Net Loss: The Salmon Netcage Industry in British Columbia." (David Suzuki Foundation)

Disease

Fighting disease is a constant battle in netcage salmon farms because of the densely packed conditions in which the salmon are raised. Tens of thousands of salmon, as many as 50,000, are kept in a single netcage.

Salmon farmers use antibiotics—including many of the same ones used to treat human infections—and other drugs and pesticides to control disease. Traces of these substances are passed on to consumers and contribute to the dangerous increase of antibiotic-resistant disease worldwide.

Paone, Sergio. (2000). "Farmed and Dangerous: Human Health Risks Associated With Salmon Farming." (Friends of Clayoquot Sound)

World Health Organization (1997). "The Medical Impact of Antimicrobial Use in Food Animals. Report of a WHO Meeting." Berlin, Germany, 13-17 October, 1997.

Escapes

Over one million Atlantic salmon have escaped into British Columbia waters, raising concern about disease transfer and competition with wild salmon for breeding space and food. On the East Coast, the risks are equally serious with the potential of farmed Atlantic salmon breeding with wild stocks and weakening their genetic makeup.

Netcages float in the open ocean and can be torn apart during storms, resulting in major escapes. Escapes also occur because of accidents, deficient farm operations, predation by marine mammals and inadvertent release during transport.

Ellis, D. and Associates. (1996). "Net Loss: The Salmon Netcage Industry in British Columbia." (David Suzuki Foundation)

British Columbia Environmental Assessment Office (1997) Salmon Aquaculture Review

Human Health

When it comes to taste and texture, wild salmon is the hands-down winner. It is also healthier than farmed salmon.

Wild salmon is one of the best sources of omega-3 fatty acids, which are vital nutrients for growth and development. Farmed salmon contain higher levels of unhealthy saturated fats and lower levels of beneficial omega-3 fatty acids because of the makeup of its feed—fish meal, fish oil and various by-products and filler. Farmed Atlantic salmon has 200 percent more fat than wild pink or chum salmon.

Many people are turning to fish for a healthy contribution to their diet. This is generally a wise decision, but when it comes to salmon—choose wild over farmed for your and your family's well-being.

World Health Organization (WHO) (1999). "Food Safety Issues Associated with Products From Aquaculture." WHO Technical Report #883, Geneva.

World Health Organization (1997). "The Medical Impact of Antimicrobial Use in Food Animals. Report of a WHO Meeting." Berlin, Germany, 13-17 October, 1997.

Reifenberg, Ann. "Wall Street Journal/Northwest."

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