

Eating Fish Responsibly

Why we care

Fish can be a healthy source of protein in your diet, and salmon is a Pacific Northwest staple. However, overfishing and destructive fishing practices have depleted many fish stocks. Farming isn't always the answer. It takes about three pounds of smaller fish to raise one pound of farmed salmon. Crowded fish pens produce large amounts of waste that pollute surrounding waters and facilitate the spread of disease requiring farmers to use antibiotics. Escaped farmed salmon can spread diseases to wild fish. In the tropics, rapidly expanding shrimp farms pose a grave threat to mangrove forests. These dense thickets of salt-tolerant trees and shrubs protect coastlines, but more than 50% have already been lost. Even if a fish is plentiful and wild-caught, it can still be problematic to eat. Large fish, such as tuna, may contain high levels of mercury.

Simple, positive change

- Use the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Guide (www.seafoodwatch.org) when purchasing fish in a store or restaurant. It lists the best and worst choices based on sources that are overfished and/or caught or farmed in ways that harm marine life.
- Pacific halibut, Alaska salmon, and Oregon shrimp are good choices.
- Avoid eating shrimp (prawns) from the tropics because of the threats to mangroves.
- Young children and women who are nursing, pregnant, or may become pregnant should eat no more than six ounces per week of albacore tuna and should avoid certain fish such as shark, swordfish and king mackerel because high mercury content.

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