

Aquaculture Fact File



Aquaculture

Aqua (water) culture (agriculture/cultivation) is basically seafood farming, including fish, shellfish and seaweeds. Approximately half of the fish we eat are farmed.

Fish are usually raised from eggs in hatcheries and moved to bigger pens or tanks until they reach the size for harvest. Different fish are grown in different ways depending on their needs and the country they are grown in. Here in the UK Atlantic salmon are grown in floating pens in the coastal waters of Scotland.

Why do we farm fish?

- Global aquaculture is growing to match a growing world population and our increasing demand for seafood. Wild capture fisheries are not able to catch any more fish than they do at the moment, therefore farming fish helps to fill the gap between demand and supply.
- Fish such as salmon, which used to be caught, are now in very low numbers, so now nearly all of the salmon we eat are farmed.
- Aquaculture helps to reduce stress on the ocean and wild fish populations.
- Farming fish has the ability to provide fish all year round.



Fish farm at Loch Fyne
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Fishmonger
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Effect on the environment

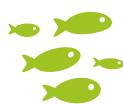
Fish farming can have negative environmental impacts.



Fish like salmon and prawns need to be fed. The food they eat is made of lots of ingredients, including other fish, and some of these are from unsustainable sources. Plants like soya are also included in the feed, and it's really important that this comes from a sustainable supply, but this is not always the case.



The pens that some fish, like salmon, are grown in are open to the surrounding sea. Therefore any uneaten fish food, waste chemicals and fish waste sinks to the seafloor causing pollution.



In some areas, diseases and parasites can be a real problem, especially if they spread outside the farming area and infect wild fish.



Sometimes farmed fish escape due to large storms or holes in the nets, which has the potential to have negative effects on wild fish in the area due to spreading disease or interbreeding.

Is aquaculture sustainable?

Good management and regulation is important to reduce negative environmental impacts and work towards sustainable aquaculture.

We produce the *Good Fish Guide* which provides sustainability ratings for wild and farmed fish so consumers can make informed choices on the food they eat.



Fish farm at Loch Awe
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