
A Note About Farmed vs. Wild Salmon and PCBs

SOTA farmed salmon producers routinely test their fish using certified, independent labs employing state of the art detection technology for PCB levels. This is done both as a routine quality control check on their operations and to satisfy specific requests from customers for assurances and certification that PCB levels are not just within U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) tolerance, but as low as possible. These tests normally show farmed salmon to be 1/80 of the FDA tolerance for PCBs.

Wild salmon are not routinely tested for PCBs. In spite of the fact that much of the focus has been to compare PCB levels in farmed salmon to wild salmon levels, the levels actually documented in large independent studies in wild salmon have been ignored.

See the enclosed editorial reprint from the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* for one example of PCB levels in wild salmon from Puget Sound in Washington state. This study of a large sample, done by the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, found salmon in the Sound contained 49 ppb, close to twice the amount in farmed salmon produced in North and South America. Another study, done by a Swedish scientist and published in the scientific journal *Arctic*, showed levels in Copper River salmon to be on the order of 70 ppb, almost three times the average levels in farmed salmon produced in North and South America.

The FDA Tolerance vs. the Industry Standard

SOTA members strictly comply with the FDA tolerance and believe that, especially in light of the risk-benefit equation, it is adequate. However, that tolerance is not our target, nor is it the industry standard.

We believe that PCBs have no place in our food supply at any level. SOTA members are working towards that goal in a variety of ways. As a result, our levels, which are a fraction of the FDA tolerance, continue to decline as the industry aggressively attacks this problem.

We have requested that the FDA clarify the tolerances and recommendations regarding PCBs in salmon and other foods so that consumers will have the tools they need to make the best dietary choices possible. We look forward to working with the FDA and other food industry stakeholders to resolve this issue. We hope that other food production programs will follow our lead and move as aggressively as our industry is in reducing PCBs in other foods.