

FICTION

Farmed salmon are high in PCBs.

Even at these levels which are well below the FDA tolerance, the levels of PCBs in farmed salmon are dangerous and significantly increase the risk of cancer.

Farmed salmon are higher in PCBs than wild salmon.

PCBs in farmed salmon comprise a significant part of the PCBs people ingest.

Farmed salmon have a mercury problem.

Farmed salmon are higher in saturated fat than wild salmon.

Farmed salmon are inferior in omega-3 content.

FACT

Farmed salmon from Chile, Canada and the USA are typically found to have 1/100 of the FDA tolerance for PCBs. Routine testing shows levels often 1/400 of the tolerance.

- The 2003 National Academy of Sciences review of PCBs in foods made recommendations on decreasing consumption for other foods to limit PCB intake. However, they recommended no change in fish/salmon intake.
- The National Cancer Institute disagrees that there is any conclusive evidence that the low PCB levels found in salmon are linked to cancer.
- The FDA recently reviewed the tolerance level and affirmed that it is correct and protective of consumers.

Wild salmon are not routinely tested as farmed salmon are, but several studies found higher PCB levels in wild salmon than are found in farmed salmon. These were in the Puget Sound of Washington State and the Copper River of Alaska. Both were government studies of a large sample. PCB levels were not above the FDA tolerance and this fish, as is the case with farmed salmon, is safe to eat.

For more details see *Food Safety Fact Sheet*. In summary, based on the average per capita consumption, people get eight times the amount of PCBs in a year from eating beef. PCBs from salmon represent about six percent of the total PCBs from food.

Because of the focus on mercury in fish, extensive tests are constantly done and mercury is most typically not detected at all in farmed salmon. When it is detected, it is at extremely low levels, well below that in almost all other fish.

One species of wild salmon has 50% more saturated fat than farmed, one species has about the same amount, and three of the wild salmon species have less. The important point is that all of these—wild and farmed—are relatively low in saturated fat (one-third of chicken), so these differences are meaningless and only serve to confuse consumers.

Farmed salmon are consistently higher in omega-3 fatty acids than all but one species of wild salmon which has about 6% more. On average, you will get twice the omega-3 in farmed salmon compared to wild.

FICTION

People prefer the taste of wild salmon.

Farmed salmon are dyed.

The products in the feed of wild salmon which account for the color are dangerous.

Farmed salmon feeds are depleting wild fish (meal) stocks.

Farmed salmon are “bathed in antibiotics.”

Salmon farms pollute the ocean.

Everyone can get the benefits of salmon by eating wild salmon.

FACT

Taste tests are very variable. In general, the larger, unbiased tests show: some prefer wild (20%), some prefer farmed (20%), and 60% have no preference.

Farmed salmon are not dyed. Farmed salmon gain their color much the same way wild salmon does—from compounds contained in the feed they eat.

Both astaxanthin and canthaxanthin used in the feed of farmed salmon are carotenoids: nutrients which are found in virtually all animal or plant life in one form or another. The products in salmon feed are nature identical to those eaten by wild fish. Levels of astaxanthin in farmed salmon, the principal carotenoid fed, are equal to or lower than those found in wild salmon.

Salmon account for 9% of the fishmeal used in the world. The consumption of fishmeal has remained constant over the past 10 years even as salmon consumption has risen, and forage fish are not at risk, according to FAO studies. Only 30% of the feed fed to salmon is fishmeal, the rest is plant-based feed. Salmon convert 1.5 lbs. of feed into a pound of edible fish. Wild salmon need 10 to 15 lbs., and beef about 10 lbs.

Farmed salmon are bathed only in clean seawater. In general, 3% of the feed contains antibiotics which are used to treat diseases, which occur in both wild and farmed salmon. Careful attention is paid to withdrawal times to ensure that antibiotic levels in salmon are below FDA permissible tolerances when they are harvested.

This is simply not true. See SOTA fact sheet on the environment for detailed facts.

- Farmed salmon typically cost \$5.00 per pound, wild salmon cost \$12.00 to \$18.00 per pound. The salmon-cost of a home-cooked meal for four people (1.5 lbs.) is \$7.50 for farmed and \$18.00 to \$27.00 for wild.
- Fresh wild salmon is available four months of the year.