

MAJORITY OF CANADIANS EAT SEAFOOD, BUT FREQUENCY DOESN'T MEET HEALTH GUIDELINES

Fish is more popular with men than women, and salmon is the overall preference

OTTAWA, June 6, 2011 /CNW/ - A new survey reveals 88 percent of Canadians have eaten seafood over the past three months. However, only 15 percent of fish consumers and 5 percent of shellfish consumers are meeting Canada Food Guide recommendations of two seafood servings per week¹.

Commissioned by the [Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance \(CAIA\)](#) - which represents fish and shellfish farming companies and their suppliers - the [Canadian Seafood Survey](#) found that more men than women like the taste of fish (73 vs. 66 percent, respectively), and that men have a more positive impression of farmed seafood than women. Nearly three-quarters of Canadians eat salmon (74 percent), followed by trout (45 percent) and shellfish (43 percent).

"The good news is that Canadians are eating seafood," said Ruth Salmon, CAIA's Executive Director. "Unfortunately, our seafood consumption frequency is far below national dietary guidelines of eight servings per month. Seafood is one of nature's best sources of omega-3 fatty acids, which reduces the risk of stroke, heart attack and Alzheimer's Disease, guards against Rheumatoid Arthritis and reduces depression."

Canadians eat finfish an average of 3.7 times per month, and our average shellfish consumption frequency is 1.9 times per month. The most common reason for eating seafood is health (79 percent), followed by taste (70 percent). Men are more likely to say they like the taste of fish compared to women. Almost half of Canadians (48 percent) eat fish regularly at home, while 42 percent typically order fish in restaurants. Older Canadians eat seafood more often than younger respondents and immigrants eat finfish more often than people born in Canada.

"We were surprised to learn the taste of fish is more favourable with men than women," Salmon points out. "Looking at species preference, it's not surprising that salmon is the most popular choice. All of our seafood has world-wide reputation for quality and freshness, and we're particularly known for our salmon. Both farmed and wild salmon are excellent nutritional choices, so it's not surprising that one-third of Canadians don't have a preference. Leading up to World Oceans Day, it's important to point out that farmed salmon has the added benefit of taking pressure off wild stocks and being available fresh, year-round."

Conducted in April 2011 with 1,196 randomly selected Canadians, the [Canadian Seafood Survey](#) reveals that 60 percent of Canadians are aware of Canada's aquaculture industry, and that men have a more positive impression of farmed seafood than women. "Finfish and shellfish farming generate \$2.1 billion for the national economy, and takes place in every province, plus the Yukon. Aquaculture provides 14,500 jobs in coastal, rural and First Nations communities, where other industries are in decline."

British Columbians were more likely to eat fish 6 to 10 times per month (20 percent) than other Canadians, and have the highest average consumption (4.23 times per month). British Columbians and Quebecers eat shellfish most often, while Atlantic and Central Canadians eat shellfish least often.

"Our low national shellfish consumption doesn't reflect our delicious selection of Canadian products - in particular mussels, oysters and clams - which are in high demand internationally. Plus, they're easy and fast to cook at home."

The complete survey, which also includes Canadians' opinions towards creating a national Aquaculture Act, is [available online](#).

¹ Canada Food Guide: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/alt_formats/hpfb-dgpsa/pdf/food-guide-aliment/view_eatwell_vue_bienmang-eng.pdf

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