

VOLUNTARY SEAFOOD LABELLING GUIDELINES

Canadian Regulations are Missing the Mark

Many seafood items are sold in Canada with minimal information on the product package or label. Currently, the only mandatory element that must be on all seafood is a common name.

However, some retailers are choosing to voluntarily put more information on their seafood labels, to increase transparency, build consumer trust, and follow best practice.¹

Rationale for better seafood labelling at the retail level:

- Consumers trust brands that are transparent and accountable.
- Storied seafood sells.² Consumers increasingly want to know more about the food they buy, such as where it comes from.
- Places your company ahead of the curve, as consumers are beginning to ask for it.³
- Canadian labelling standards are well behind our largest trading partners in the EU and US. We want to ensure that Canadian seafood and our Canadian markets maintain a strong reputation for consistent high quality and honestly labelled seafood.
- 80% of Canadians surveyed supported better seafood labelling.⁴
- With accurate and detailed information, retailers and their consumers can be more confident in the foods they purchase. They are also better able to hold the supply chain accountable to their claims with increased product transparency.
- Requiring detailed labelling throughout the supply chain can safeguard your company against unknowingly sourcing seafood that does not meet your policy standards, or come from an undesirable fishery or aquaculture operation.

To follow industry best practice, seafood labelling should include:

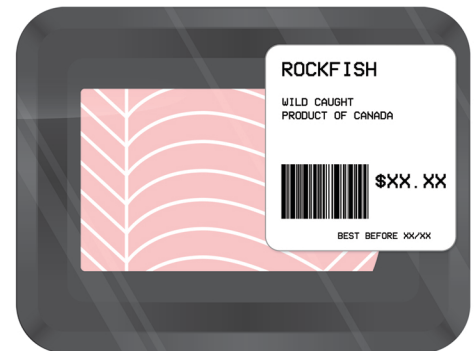
- **Scientific Name** •
- **Common Name** •
- **Country of Origin** •
- **Country of Processing** •
- **Wild or Farmed** •
- **Gear Type or Farming Method** •

EUROPEAN UNION



*United Kingdom commercial designation

UNITED STATES



CANADA



For more information,
visit labelmyseafood.ca

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Whether choosing food for **environmental sustainability** or **health** reasons, **supporting local fishers and fish farmers**, or simply **wanting to know exactly what's in a package**, having additional information about seafood can help buyers make decisions with more confidence.

Why It Matters:



Geographic Origin – The location of catch or the location of the aquaculture operation should be clear to consumers. Canadian seafood exported for processing and then re-imported is currently labelled as a product from the export country (called “Country of Origin”), even though it was caught or farmed in Canada. This can be misleading, especially as each country and each body of water has different sustainability, and quality control practices.



Scientific Name – The use of a species scientific name ensures greater clarity. Common names can apply to many different species, and can vary from region to region, and language to language. The common name “rockfish”, for example, is an accepted name for more than 100 different species. Also, the number and variety of acceptable common names on the French CFIA Fish List is different than the English list.



Production Method (Farmed or Wild) – Both the U.S. and the E.U. differentiate between wild-caught and farmed seafood. This simple piece of information can have health and sustainability implications, and can help differentiate very different seafood products.



Gear Type or Farming Method – The gear type for wild-caught seafood can have different impacts on the ocean floor and on other species accidentally caught in the gear. For farm-raised fish, different farming methods can have very different impacts on the surrounding environment and the native species that live there.

Examples of Retail Seafood Labels with Voluntary Information Included:



¹ Such as those outlined by the Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions, or similar coalitions: <http://solutionsforseafood.org/>

² The Future of Fish – The Untapped Potential of Story to Sell Seafood: <http://www.futureoffish.org/resources/research-reports/untapped-potential-story-sell-seafood>

³ In just 5 weeks, SeaChoice garnered over 12,700 signatures from Canadians demanding better seafood labelling. These signatures supported our submission to CFIA on the Food Labelling Modernization Initiative, as well as our comments on the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations: <http://seachoice.org/state-of-our-oceans-2/traceability-and-labelling/>

⁴ A 2017 survey conducted by Eco-Analytics found that over 80% of the 3000 Canadians surveyed agreed that “All seafood sold in Canada should be labelled with information identifying the species, where it was caught, and how it was caught”, <http://ecologyaction.ca/ecanalytics>

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SeaChoice.org
for healthy oceans