



ARE YOU EATING SEAFOOD IN THE DARK?

What's the Issue?

Have you ever bought seafood and wondered what fish you're actually buying? According to Canadian guidelines, a package labeled as "rockfish" could be one of more than 100 possible species, some of which are **endangered** and others which are **sustainably caught**.

Canadians deserve to know more about their seafood.

Other countries have more stringent requirements, so why don't we? It is the government's responsibility to make sure that labels and packages containing fish and seafood products are truthful, and tell us what we need to know about the seafood we are buying.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is reviewing its practices and asking Canadians for input on food labelling.

We need your voice!



Do you care about:

Knowing what you're eating?

Your Health?

Sustainability?

Canada's Competitive Economy?

Traceability?

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Click [HERE](#) to tell CFIA that you want more information on your seafood labels.

CANADIANS DEMAND BETTER SEAFOOD LABELLING

Digging Deeper

Canadian regulations on fish and seafood labelling state that packages and labels must not be misleading or deceptive¹. But while there are hundreds of fish and seafood species, caught or farmed in different ways, coming from different countries, being sold in Canada – the only fixed requirement for seafood labelling in Canada is that it lists a “common name” on the packaging (which often times isn’t even that common!).

This isn’t enough!

Knowing a product’s scientific name, geographic origin, production method, and gear type or farming method are important factors that play into the product’s environmental and socio-economic sustainability. This information should follow that product from source to sale. Other countries have more information on Canadian products in *their* markets, so why are *we* eating in the dark?

Recommendation for Seafood Labelling

The Canadian government needs to include more mandatory information on food labels so that businesses and consumers can make informed decisions and be safeguarded against fraud and mislabelling. Whether choosing food for **environmental sustainability** or **health** reasons, **supporting local fishers** and **fish farmers**, or simply **wanting to know what’s in a package**, having additional information about seafood can help you make decisions with more confidence.

It is imperative that seafood labelling contain the following information:

Geographic Origin² - 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 as each country and each body of water has different sustainability, and quality control practices.

Scientific Name³ - The use of a species scientific name ensures greater clarity. Common names apply to 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 of acceptable common names on the French CFIA Fish List is different than the English list⁴.

Production Method (Farmed or Wild)⁵ - 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.

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.

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Recommendation Continued

If seafood labelling included these four additions (either directly or via mobile scanning or “Quick Response” (QR) code⁶), it would be easier to trace products throughout the supply chain, ensuring that fraudulent or unsafe foods are identified more rapidly and their distributors held accountable⁷. With complete, accurate, consistent and truthful information, Canadians will be more confident in the foods they purchase and consume.

Incorporating this information on labels will further align our domestic regulations with our major trading partners, namely the United States and the European Union. Having the same requirements for imports, exports and domestic products will help to **facilitate smoother sale and trade operations for Canadian businesses.**

Lend Your Voice

Do you want the Canadian government to shed some light on the seafood that we are eating? **Demand better mandatory labelling of fish and seafood in Canada by filling in our petition.** A list of signatories will be submitted to the CFIA as stakeholder comments for the [Food Labelling and Modernization Initiative](#) consultation process.

**[CLICK HERE TO VIEW AND SIGN THE LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR
BETTER SEAFOOD LABELLING IN CANADA](#)**



¹ Section 27, Fish Inspection Regulations; Section 5(1), Food and Drug Act; 7(1), Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act.

² In response to the CFIA Food Labelling Modernization Initiative, section 1.4 - Origin of Imported Food

³ In response to the CFIA FLMI, section 1.7(b), Modified Standardized Common Name

⁴ For example, on the CFIA Fish List, *Sebastes capensis* in English has 6 common names, but in French it has 2 common names listed.

⁵ In response to the CFIA FLMI, section 1.7(b), Modified Standardized Common Name

⁶ The CFIA has already identified the SmartScan™ initiative as a possible option.

⁷ In response to the CFIA Food Labelling Modernization Initiative, section 2: New Approach for Truthful and Not Misleading Food Labelling