

2023 SUMMARY OF GROCER SCORES

Spotlight: Farmed salmon

Open-net pen farmed salmon remains on the “avoid” list. This makes it a priority seafood item that necessitates grocers to take timely action (e.g., remove or improve) to meet their sustainable seafood commitments.

- Farmed salmon scores were low across the board for all but two grocers.
- Buy-Low remains the only grocer to not sell any farmed salmon.
- Sobeys received the highest score at 68 per cent, due in part to their being the only grocer to preferentially source and promote closed containment farmed salmon products.
- Costco, Co-op, Loblaws, METRO, Save-On and Walmart continue to sell salmon raised in open-net pen farms and rely on farmed salmon certifications that are not fit for purpose. These certifications, including the Aquaculture Stewardship Council and Best Aquaculture Practices, fail to adequately protect wild salmon from disease or sea lice impacts from certified farms.
- Sobeys and Save-On submitted letters to the ASC encouraging improvements to their certification.
- While all grocers label “wild” on some seafood, nearly all avoid labelling “farmed” seafood, including salmon. METRO and Costco are the only grocers to label farmed salmon as such.
- All grocers have committed not to sell genetically engineered salmon. This is welcomed given GE salmon’s potential risk to wild salmon.

Overall

- The national average across all eight grocers decreased from 71 per cent in 2022 to 68 per cent in 2023.
- Sobeys was the only grocer to experience an overall score increase. Costco and METRO’s scores stayed the same, while all others decreased.

Sustainability commitments

- Sobeys announced its commitment to full chain traceability on all its seafood products through the use of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership’s Seafood Metrics platform.
- More than half of grocers still don’t include all the seafood they sell under their commitments.
- METRO brought its final banner, Marche Adonis, under its sustainable seafood commitment.

Social commitments

- Costco was the only grocer to see a score increase in this area as a result of reporting on the social audit outcomes for suppliers through its first ever Human Rights Policy.
- Half the grocers saw a score decrease due to inadequate human rights due diligence processes in their supply chains.

Labelling

- The amount of critical information being applied to labels decreased from 53 to just 38 per cent. The only grocers whose scores did not decrease were METRO and Walmart. However, comparatively, METRO scored 100 while Walmart scored a mere 25 per cent.
- All grocers are labelling at least some products as "wild." However, the only grocers to call out "farmed" on their seafood labels are Costco and METRO.

Greenwashing

- Following SeaChoice's guidance, Save-On removed its "Responsibly Sourced" claim from its packaging.
- FCL, Loblaw and Walmart continue to apply self claims of sustainability to their private-label products.
- Costco is the only brand to only apply credible certification claims on its packaging.

Other high-risk species

Farmed shrimp

- All grocers are at least preferentially sourcing minimum Best Aquaculture Practices 2 two-star or Aquaculture Stewardship Council - certified farmed shrimp; however, other actions to support improvements to the farming of this species – such as precompetitive collaborations and funding aquaculture improvement projects – are minimal to non-existent.

Skipjack tuna

- None of the grocers exclusively sell pole- and line-caught skipjack, and METRO is the only grocer to preferentially source these products.

For the full 2023 results across all 8 grocers, click [here](#).