

ALASKA SEAFOOD 101



A species guide and glossary for sourcing Alaska seafood.



Wild, Natural & Sustainable®



SALMON

Alaska boasts an abundance of five exceptional and delicious species of wild salmon that help you meet every price and performance need. In fact, nearly 95% of wild-caught salmon harvested in North America come from Alaska. Most Alaska salmon are available fresh when the season officially opens in early May through mid-October (with a limited amount of king salmon in the winter months), with a limited amount of king salmon in the winter months, and frozen year-round.



KING (CHINOOK) SALMON
Oncorhynchus tshawytscha

King salmon is the largest of the five Alaska salmon species, and is prized for its high oil content and succulent meat.



COHO (SILVER) SALMON
Oncorhynchus kisutch

The second largest of the Alaska salmon species, is known for its orange-red flesh. Alaska coho salmon should not be confused with a “silver-brite” keta, a grading term used to describe the skin color of Alaska keta salmon.



KETA (CHUM) SALMON
Oncorhynchus keta

Popular in nearly every foodservice segment, Alaska keta salmon combine economy with excellent texture, flavor and color. It is the firmest of all five species of Alaska salmon.



SOCKEYE (RED) SALMON
Oncorhynchus nerka

Sockeye salmon is known for its distinctive rich flavor, deep and lasting red color and firm texture. It is the second most abundant species of Alaska salmon.



PINK SALMON
Oncorhynchus gorbuscha

An economical choice, pink salmon is the smallest and most abundant Alaska salmon species. Most canned salmon features meat from pink salmon.

COMMON TERMINOLOGY

Bleeding
Dressed
Drip Loss
FAS
PBO

Purse Seine
Refreshed
Round
Fillet; Fillet Portion
Gillnet

Semi-Bright
Silver-Brite
H&G
Hook & Line
Loin

Sustainable
Troll
Ocean Run
Watermarked
Wild



SHELLFISH

Alaska's pristine, frigid waters are also home to massive and sustainably utilized populations of shellfish from a variety of species, many of which are some of the most demanded in the seafood market. From luxurious crab to succulent scallops, Alaska has shellfish to suit all tastes and dishes, and conservative management ensures a steady supply will be available for generations to come.



KING CRAB
Paralithodes camtschatica

Alaska king crab (most commonly the red and golden varieties) is the largest and most impressive crab and is unmatched in flavor, texture, and regal presentation.



SNOW CRAB
Chionoecetes opilio/bairdi

Two species are actually marketed as snow crab, *C. bairdi* and *C. opilio*. Sometimes also called queen crab, they feature sweet, lean meat with a delicate flavor.



DUNGENESS CRAB
Metacarcinus Magister (Cancer Magister)

The largest and most flavorful Dungeness Crab comes from Alaska and is an exceptional value due to ease of preparation. It has a distinctly sweet, almost nutty flavor and tender; flaky white meat.



SCALLOPS
Patinopecten caurinus

Also called 'weathervane' scallops, Alaska scallops are known for their sweet flavor and tender, buttery texture. They are the largest scallops anywhere in the world and feature no additives or artificial treatments.



ALASKA SHRIMP
Pandalus spp. & Pandalopsis dispar

Alaska has several species of shrimp varying in size, such as spot prawns, sidestriped, coonstripe, humpy and northern, all with a lean and fresh flavor.

COMMON TERMINOLOGY

Brine Freezing
Carpus
Cluster
Counts
Dactylus

Dry Pack
Feeder Claw
In-fill
Killer Claw

Merus/Merus Meat
Pots
Propodus
Scored

Select Portion
Shoulder
Snap 'n Eats
Sustainable



WHITEFISH

The distinct species of Alaska Whitefish offer their own unique and varied appeal, while sharing a singular reputation as the world's finest. Alaska produces two-thirds of the United States' seafood harvest, much of which is made up of whitefish species. Our whitefish varieties consistently live up to the highest expectations, plus their availability and versatility ensures a variety of options year-round.



SABLEFISH (BLACK COD)
Anoplopoma fimbria

Alaska has the largest sablefish population in the world. This premium whitefish has high oil content comprised of heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids. Sablefish is actually not a member of the cod family.



HALIBUT
Hippoglossus stenolepis

Alaska halibut is the largest of the flatfish and has a reputation as the world's premium whitefish. Average size ranges from 25-35 lbs. The majority of the domestic supply of halibut comes from Alaska.



COD
Gadus macrocephalus

Alaska cod is one of the most popular North Pacific groundfish. Commonly marketed as Alaska cod, Pacific cod, or true cod, but should not be confused with Atlantic Cod.



ALASKA POLLOCK
Gadus chalcogrammus
(*Theragra chalcogramma*)

As Alaska's most abundant seafood species, genuine Alaska pollock (sometimes called walleye pollock) is a lean, mild and tender member of the cod family, and is not to be confused with Atlantic pollock, which is darker and oilier. Alaska pollock is also the primary fish used in the creation of the highest quality surimi.

COMMON TERMINOLOGY

Blocks
Deep Skinned
Catcher Processor
FAS

Fletch
IQF
Layer Pack
Longline

Once Frozen
Portion
Shatterpack
Surimi Seafood

Sustainable
Trawl
Twice Frozen



WHITEFISH



SURIMI SEAFOOD

Made from Alaska pollock, surimi seafood, Alaska surimi is pre-cooked, comes in many flavors, and is a great source of high-quality protein.



ATKA MACKEREL

Pleurogrammus monoptygerius

A traditional favorite for generations in Japan, Alaska Atka mackerel is prized for its unique, rich flavor and dense, rich oil content.



SOLE/FLOUNDER

Paralichthyidae

There are several different species of sole available in Alaska—including yellowfin sole, arrowtooth flounder, rock sole, flathead sole, and Alaska plaice.



HERRING

Clupea pallasii

Packed with healthy omega-3's, pacific herring has a fine soft texture when cooked and are great for pickling, smoking, and curing.



ROCKFISH

Sebastes spp.

More than thirty species of rockfish swim throughout Alaska's coastal waters, with at least twelve species ranging as far north as the Bering Sea. Pacific Ocean Perch (POP), Northern rockfish, and dusky rockfish are the most abundant.

COMMON TERMINOLOGY

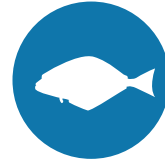
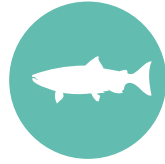
Blocks
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TERMINOLOGY



Anadromous - Fish that hatch in fresh water, migrate to saltwater to mature, and then return to fresh water to spawn.

Anterior - Refers to the head end of a fish.

Aquaculture - Finfish or shellfish raised in fresh or saltwater pens or ponds or on growing surfaces such as ropes or posts (also known as farm-raised).

Blast Freezing - Freezing by circulating cold air over batched product placed in trays or racks.

Benthic - Species living near the bottom of the sea.

Bleeding - Severing an artery of a fish before the fish dies to allow the heart to pump out the fish's blood. The result is a higher quality meat.

Blocks - Frozen compressed slabs of fish fillets, usually without skin and bone, used as raw material for value-added products.

Boneless Fillet - A fillet from which the pinbones have been removed.

Brine Freezing - Use of heavily concentrated salt solution, super chilled to freeze product immediately. Used most often in the freezing of Alaska king and snow crab.

Carpus - In king and snow crab, that segment of the walking leg located between the merus and the propodus.

Catcher Processor - A vessel equipped to process and freeze its catch.

Chunk & Flake - In surimi seafood products, refers to the shape, or style of the pieces; chunks being shaped like cylinders with flat ends, flakes being shaped like cylinders with angled-cut ends.

Cluster - A product form consisting of a group of legs and a claw from one side of a crab, with the connecting shoulder area still attached. Also known as a "section."

Counts - Shellfish is sold by size and count, which are listed on the package or carton. The size determines the number of seafood pieces per weight. The size count is the most accurate measure of the amount and size of product being purchased.

Dactylus - In king and snow crab, the tip of the walking leg and the moveable portions of the claw pincers.

Deep Skinned - Removing the fat layer underneath the skin on oily species for milder flavor and improved shelf life; also called defatted.

Dorsal - The top of a fish.

Dressed - Whole fish that have been gutted, and scaled, and generally have had their fins removed.

Drip Loss - The loss of weight in whole fish, fillets, or shellfish that occurs as the product gives up moisture. Also, the moisture given up when a frozen product is thawed.

Dry Pack - Scallops that are free of phosphates.

Ex-Vessel Price - Price received by fishermen for fish, shellfish and other aquatic plants and animals landed at the dock (also referred to as Grounds Price or 1st Receiver).

Farm-Raised - Finfish or shellfish raised in fresh or saltwater pens or ponds or on growing surfaces such as ropes or posts (also known as aquaculture).

FAS - Product that has been Frozen At Sea.

Feeder Claw - On king crab, the left-hand claw, also known as the "small" claw.

Fillet; Fillet Portion - The edible portion of a fish that is cut away from the backbone on each side of the body; a portion cut from a fillet.

Flash Frozen - Seafood that is frozen quickly using extreme cold temperature to prevent the formation of ice crystals between the fibers of the muscle.

Fresh-Frozen - Seafood frozen as rapidly as possible after harvest to lock in the quality present at harvest.

Fletch - A fillet cut from large flatfish, such as halibut, and then further divided into boneless portions.

Formed Fillets - Portions cut from blocks in such a way that they appear to be natural fillets although all are exactly the same size and shape.

Fresh (Chilled) - Product that has never been frozen, cooked, cured or otherwise preserved.

Gillnet - Involves laying a net wall in the water in the path of the fish; the fish swim into the mesh and their gills become trapped in the webbing, preventing escape.

Glazed - Indicates the fish has been dipped in water after freezing. Ice forms a glazed surface around the body of the fish or meat, protecting it from damage by freezer burn.

H&G - Fish that has been headed and gutted.

Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) - The basis of a mandatory seafood inspection program overseen jointly by the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Food and Drug Administration. HACCP requires suppliers to write up and follow a program detailing all points in their manufacturing process where hazards exist.

Hook & Line - Fishery methods that employ the use of hooks and lines including longline and troll, among others.

In-Fill - The degree to which crab shells are filled with meat.

IQF - Individually Quick Frozen indicates the individual forms have been frozen separately. This prevents the forms from sticking together and facilitates use.

J-Cut - A method of removing pinbones and nape to produce a "table ready" product. J-Cut fillets are the premium trimmed fillets.

Killer Claw - On king crab, the right-hand claw, also known as the “large” claw.

Layer Pack - Frozen fillets packed in layers separated by sheets of plastic; fillets in each layer may overlap and be frozen together.

Loin - The central thick part of a fish fillet. Also refers to a boneless section of a large fish such as halibut. Loins may be cut into steaks.

Longline - Longline gear is composed of groundline, buoy lines, and gangions, which are short pieces of line with hooks on the end. Longlines are set along the seabed, with baited hooks every few yards. Longline hooks are retrieved one at a time. The only legal fishing method for halibut is longline gear.

Meat Equivalent - The actual weight of fish in a finished breaded product, expressed in ounces, used as a nutritional comparison.

Merus/Merus Meat - In king and snow crab, the largest segment of the walking legs; the largest leg-muscle meat of a crab, from the thickest leg segments.

Nape - The front and thinnest part of a fillet, around the belly area.

Ocean Run - Refers to salmon that are still in the ocean and are therefore bright and firm. “Ocean-Run” is also used by seafood companies to indicate a pack of random-weight or unsized products.

Once Frozen - Refers to seafood that has been frozen at its primary processor, and has not been slacked for reprocessing.

PBO - Pinbone out.

Pelagic - Species living in the open sea.

Pinbones - A strip of small bones found along the midline of many fillets; can be removed with “V” or “J” cuts or may be pulled by hand or machine.

Plate Freezing - Freezing by use of a refrigerant flowing through hollow metal plates that are in direct contact with seafood. Typically the plates are moveable to sandwich the product between two chilled surfaces, compressing it to ensure uniform contact and freezing.

Portion - Usually a square or rectangular piece of fish with varying weights. Can be plain or breaded, raw or precooked.

Pots - A method of fishing for crab, shrimp and some types of finfish using baited wire traps called pots.

Previously Frozen - Frozen seafood that has been slacked out, or thawed, for sale in that state. Must be clearly identified as “previously frozen” product to distinguish it from fresh.

Propodus - In king and snow crab, the segment of the walking leg located between the carpus and dactylus.

PUFI - (Packed Under Federal Inspection) The seal that appears on products packed in accordance with the standards of this voluntary inspection program.

Purse Seine - A net that is set in a circle around a school of fish, and then is drawn closed (“pursed”).

Refreshed - Also called “previously frozen.” Seafood that has been frozen then slacked out.

Round - Denotes whole, un-gutted fish with head and tail attached.

Scored - A series of cuts in the sides of the shell of crab legs and claws, for ease of removing from the shell.

Select Portion - In king crab, the shoulder and merus portion.

Semi-Bright - Keta salmon that has been harvested in freshwater on its way to spawn. Also called “brights.”

Shatterpack - A box of frozen fillets in which the layers are separated by sheets of paper or plastic. Individual fillets can be removed without thawing the entire box. The name derives from the fact that the pack can be “shattered” by dropping it on a hard surface to separate the frozen fillets.

Shoulder - In king and snow crab, the segment of the walking legs and claws adjacent to the body cavity.

Silver-Brite (Silver-Bright) - A term referring to keta salmon that have been harvested at sea rather than in freshwater.

Slacked Out - Previously frozen seafood that has been thawed.

Snap 'n Eats - Crab legs that have been cooked, frozen, and scored through the shell so they can be hand cracked for easy eating.

Surimi Seafood - Surimi is a term meaning “formed fish,” and refers to fish pulp formed into various shapes. The highest quality surimi found in the U.S. is made from wild Alaska Pollock. It is typically molded into crab legs, lobster chunks, shrimp and scallops, and colored to complete its transformation into affordable shellfish.

Sustainable - Fisheries can exist long-term without compromising the survival of the species or the health of the surrounding ecosystem.

Trawl - Fishing gear made up of a funnel-shaped net towed through the water, its mouth kept open by two doors set at an angle to the direction of the vessel.

Tripolyphosphate - A sodium-based additive used to control moisture loss. Often applied at sea to fresh-shucked scallops. Seafood with tripoly added is referred to as “wet,” “dipped,” or “treated.” Alaska Scallops are 100% natural, with no artificial treatments or additives.

Troll - Trollers are small fishing vessels operated by one or two fishermen and use a number of lines and hooks baited with herring or artificial lures. Fish are caught one at a time, and handled individually.

Twice Frozen - Seafood that was frozen soon after harvest, later thawed and processed further, and then refrozen.

Value-Added - Product that has been reprocessed and repackaged into a consumer-ready form.

V-Cut - A method of removing pinbones by making a V-shaped cut along both sides of the pinbone strip, leaving most of the nape.

Watermarked - Describes the darkened, dulled skin of a salmon as it sexually matures and enters freshwater prior to spawning.

Wild - Fish or shellfish that have a natural life-cycle and feed upon a natural marine diet.

Yield - The amount of meat that can be recovered from a particular fish or shellfish; usually expressed as a percent.



Wild, Natural & Sustainable®

Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute

311 N. Franklin Street, Suite 200, Juneau, Alaska 99801

Phone: 1(907) 465-5560 or 1(800) 478-2903

alaskaseafood.org