



*For immediate release*

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## **Healthy Menu Choices Using U.S. Farm-Raised Seafood**

Although there is a growing body of evidence that consuming more seafood is essential to maintaining good health, annual average per capita seafood consumption in the United States dropped significantly in 2011. The United States Department of Agriculture 2010 Dietary Guidelines strongly recommend two seafood meals per week and most other health-related organizations including the American Heart Association and the National Academy of Sciences have similar recommendations. This advice holds true for people of all ages including pregnant women, young children, and older adults. Yet, the average American eats less than half the recommended amount.

U.S. farm-raised seafood products are packed with important health benefits and are a welcome change from the old menu standards. You can be sure that products raised in the United States are grown under strict environmental and food safety regulations. In addition, many products can be sourced locally. That means that you know how they were grown and can be sure that you are getting the best quality product. Look for the farm raised in the USA label.

Seafood is the main dietary source of the heart-healthy long chain omega-3 fatty acids eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA). These nutrients reduce the risk of heart disease, promote brain health, and play an important role in maintaining eye health. They have also been linked to improved cognitive development and visual acuity in children. In addition, seafood provides high quality protein, important vitamins and minerals, while it is low in calories. All of these attributes make it an important choice for the American diet.

Then, why aren't we eating more seafood? One reason is that many Americans are afraid to prepare seafood at home. They prefer to eat seafood in restaurants where each person can make his or her own menu choice. With a weak economy, people are eating out less and when they eat at home, they are more budget conscious than ever.

(more)

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Healthy Menu Choices Press Release

How do we keep seafood on the menu? U.S. farm-raised seafood (clams, oysters, mussels, and finfish) is a great way to upscale pasta dishes and is a real customer pleaser. For your heart-healthy customers: trout, salmon, and oysters are good choices. Want a low calorie main course? U.S. farm-raised seafood coupled with steamed vegetables fits the bill. If pregnant women are concerned about mercury in seafood, many of the low-mercury fish and shellfish recommended by the federal Food and Drug Administration including channel catfish, tilapia, trout and salmon are farm-raised. Build on the positive health aspects of seafood on the menu and be ready to answer customer questions on U.S. farm-raised seafood and health.

For more information visit:

The National Aquaculture Association: [www.thenaa.net](http://www.thenaa.net)  
FishWatch - US Seafood Facts: <http://www.fishwatch.gov/>  
Seafood for Health: <http://seafoodhealthfacts.org>

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