

Animal Welfare - Farmed Fish

Sustainability Snapshot



Product Description

Species-specific in-depth key performance indicators for animal welfare issues related to fish farmed for consumption.

Mission

The mission of The Sustainability Consortium (TSC) is to improve the sustainability of products when they are made, purchased, and used, with a focus on manufacturers and the retail buyers who decide what products to carry in stores. The information in this document is drawn from our detailed research on known and potential social and environmental impacts across product life cycles. TSC acknowledges that other issues exist, but we have included here those that are most relevant to the decision making of retail buying teams and manufacturers. The topics are listed alphabetically for ease of reading; the order does not represent prioritization or other criteria.

Animal Handling

Animal handlers on the farm should be properly trained in handling procedures and have knowledge of normal fish behavior, injury and disease detection, and humane fish handling. Training regimens should be documented. Improper handling may lead to fish injuries, lasting fear, and stress.

Culling Procedures

Final product manufacturers should seek collaboration with supply chain partners to set minimum requirements for culling management at the fish farm. Requirements should include selecting humane methods of euthanasia and confirmation of loss of consciousness and death to avoid animal pain. This also includes avoidance of transporting non-marketable animals as transporting unhealthy animals may cause the animal pain and stress.

Health Management

Animal health monitoring systems allow animal caretakers to identify and take action on diseases and injuries. Fish farms should establish a veterinary-client-patient-relationship as it is critical to setting goals related to animal health and welfare.

Supply Chain Transparency

Addressing many of the environmental and social challenges within an agriculture supply chain requires cooperation among the many companies involved. Final product manufacturers should determine the locations of farms that produce their supply and engage in initiatives that improve transparency, communication, and data sharing.

Water Quality

A fish's health and vigor are affected by its physical environment. Final product manufacturers should partner with suppliers to set minimum environmental and water quality standards at fish farms based on the site and species. Inadequate water quality management can reduce the amount of oxygen in the water available for fish respiration.