

# Media Release

**For Immediate Release**

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**New national poll reveals declining consumer confidence in farmed salmon.**

**One in five British Columbians (21%) plan to consume less farmed salmon in the next year and 53% think that fish farm wastes are a major marine environmental hazard.**

According to a new poll conducted by Synovate, Canadian consumers are becoming increasingly concerned about the health and environmental implications related to buying and consuming farmed salmon. The poll of 1001 randomly selected adult Canadians was conducted between February 18 and 22. The results are considered within accurate of  $\pm 3.1\%$  points, 19 times out of 20. Poll results conclude Canadian consumers are paying attention to the difference between farmed and wild salmon. In BC, more than half (52%) disagree with the statement "You never pay much attention to the difference between fish farm-raised salmon and wild caught salmon." When asked the same question in 2001, only 42% of British Columbians polled disagreed with the statement.

Canadians who voiced concerns about purchasing farmed salmon, cited chemicals and toxins, followed by antibiotics and hormones, as the cause of their concerns. Forty-five percent of consumers also think that wild salmon tastes better than farmed salmon.

In spite of known health benefits associated with eating higher amounts of omega-3s, only 3% of Canadians plan to buy and eat more farmed salmon in the next year. Fifty-eight percent of those polled will continue to buy and eat the same amount, and 13% say they will buy and eat less salmon. In BC, 21% of consumers say they will consume less farmed salmon in the next year.

"Obviously, personal health concerns are an important issue for Canadians when deciding whether to buy farmed salmon" noted Jennifer Lash, Executive Director of Living Oceans Society. "This poll clearly shows these concerns are influencing decisions in restaurants and grocery stores."

In addition to health, environmental issues are top of mind for consumers. Overall, 46 % of Canadians share environmental concerns about fish farming. Over half (56%) of British Columbians feel fish farms pose a major risk to wild stocks of salmon, compared to 39% of Canadians.

Other key consumer findings:

- 42% of Canadians feel that restaurants serving only wild salmon tend to be better quality - that number jumps to 53% in BC.
- 42% of Canadians feel that grocery stores that only sell wild caught salmon tend to offer better quality - the number is higher in BC, at 50%

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