

## Fish facts

Did you know that . . . fascinating facts about seafood.

### The seafood industry

- Seafood is a billion-pound industry with four out of five households in Great Britain consuming seafood at least once a month. In 2003, consumers in Great Britain bought 280,000 tonnes of seafood (worth £1.8 billion), an increase of 2% on 2002.
- The UK is becoming increasingly reliant on imports. Import volumes have increased by 31% from 1991 to 2002.
- Around £1.28 billion worth of seafood was imported in 2002 and the UK exported around £570 million in seafood products mainly to Continental Europe.
- Supplies of seafood to the UK can be divided into five categories:
  - Landings by UK vessels
  - Aquaculture
  - Fresh and chilled imports
  - Frozen imports
  - Other - including cured, prepared/preserved, live, meals and Flours
- The UK fishing industry employs 12,700 fishermen working on 7,000 vessels. In 2002 the UK fleet landed 686 thousand tonnes of fish worth £546 million into the UK and abroad. Source: UK Sea Fisheries Statistics 2002, DEFRA
- Aquaculture = fish and shellfish farming. Shellfish species farmed in the UK include mussels, oysters, clams, scallops and queenies. And the main marine finfish species being farmed are cod, halibut and turbot (Note: salmon is not a marine finfish. For more information about salmon farming visit [www.scottishsalmon.co.uk](http://www.scottishsalmon.co.uk)).
- There are around 280 ports, harbours and creeks around the UK where fish is landed. The major fishing ports in the UK in terms of value of fish landed are, Peterhead, Lochinver and Fraserburgh.
- There are around 500 seafood processing companies in the UK employing around 22,000 people.
- The retail market for seafood was worth over £1.8 billion in the year ending 7 December 2003. (Source: TNS SuperPanel 2003)
- The food service sector covers a range of outlets including fish and chip shops, canteens, hotels, restaurants and education. Fish and chips dominates this sector.

- There are over 8,600 fish and chip shops all over the UK. These shops sell £478 million of seafood each year.
- Declining volumes of sea fish are being landed in to the UK by UK-registered vessels - a 36% cut in volume between 1995 and 2002. While this is undoubtedly linked to cuts in quotas because of concerns about stocks it is also explained by an increasing tendency of larger vessels landing much of what they catch overseas.
- While most fish landed in the UK is landed into Scottish ports, England and Wales is by far the main market. In 2002, England and Wales accounted for 92% of household fish consumption while 63% of fish landed was in Scotland.
- The most popular species of seafood in retail is cod - consumers spent over £254 million on cod in the year ending 7 December 2003. Salmon, haddock and prawns have also seen strong sales in the latest year.
- Cod still accounts for 14% of total GB consumption and haddock for 13%. Most of our shellfish is transported to Continental markets, and prawns now account for 13% of GB consumption.
- Seafood can be divided into three separate categories:
  - **Demersal** - whitefish including cod, haddock, plaice, whiting, pollack, saithe (coley), hake, monk/anglerfish, dover sole, lemon sole, megrim, witches, brill, turbot, halibut, dogfish, skates, rays, John Dory, bass, ling, catfish, redfish.
  - **Pelagic** - oil-rich fish including herring, mackerel, pilchard, sprat, horse mackerel, whitebait, tuna.
  - **Shellfish**
    - Molluscs including scallops, oysters, cockles, mussels, winkles.
    - Crustacea including nephrops (scampi, langoustines), crabs, lobsters, crawfish, shrimps etc.
    - Cephalopods including octopus, squid, cuttlefish.