



Sustainable seafood

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There is little doubt that we are looking at our place on earth a little more closely as we become ever more

aware of the effect we have on our neighbours, not just humans but also the flora and fauna. In other words, our environment. One element of this growing awareness is the movement towards sustainable behaviours such as the food we consume. One relatively new area is in our choices of seafoods.

While making choices in favour of sustainable seafood is about creating sustainable solutions for our oceans, these choices are also about creating a sustainable diet for ourselves. Seafood is a high quality protein that is often low in fat and cholesterol. It is a good alternative to meats that are high in saturated fats.

We have all heard ‘you are what you eat’ and know how important is to eat a balanced diet. Nutritionists say that eating seafood once or twice a week can be an integral part of a heart healthy diet. The protein from seafood is considered complete because it supplies all eight essential amino acids. Omega 3 fatty acids, found in salmon, is an excellent way to boost your HDL (high density lipoprotein) which is the good type of cholesterol because it helps remove the low density lipoprotein (bad cholesterol) to the liver where it is destroyed.

Cod liver oil, which also contains valuable Omega 3 oils and Vitamin D, is also well known and many people supplement their diet with these oils. And for those who remember childhood days with tablespoons of the stuff, there are much more palatable options. Honest.

Choosing sustainable seafood is very simple; you can do it whether eating at a restaurant or buying seafood at the fish market or grocery store. As consumers, we have ample power to make change — never underestimate the power of consumers. We all know that one of the best ways to send messages to both business and governments is with your wallet where your ‘power’ speaks volumes.

Many Canadians are eating seafood for health benefits. Knowing what to choose is as simple as referring to Canada’s Seafood Guide (find it at www.seachoice.org). Choose the “green-listed” seafoods listed in the guide. When you buy or order these products, you are sending a strong signal in favour of sustainable fishing. The website even has a downloadable pocket card that you can keep in your wallet or purse that will help you identify the best seafood choices.

Questions such as what type of seafood is this, where was it fished or farmed and how was it caught or farmed are all important. Seafood with a “red advisory” should generally be avoided as they pose a

health threat from mercury or PCB, dioxins or pesticides.

Seafood is plentiful in coastal British Columbia. Oysters, crabs, clams, mussels, shrimp, salmon and cod are all listed in the seafood guide’s ‘best choice’

list. There is nothing quite like fresh salmon, clams or oysters and there are many different recipes to try to ensure you never get tired of them! It may be good for you, but it is still delicious.

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