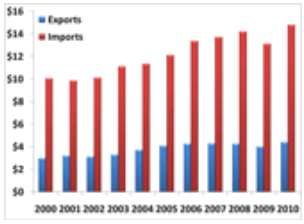
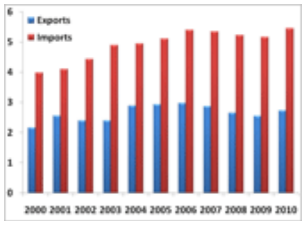
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service

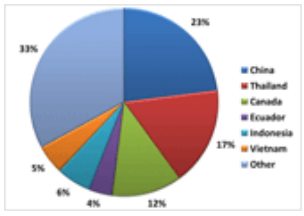
FishWatch - U.S. Seafood Facts



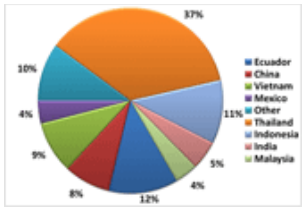
How much seafood does the U.S. import and export? (By value)



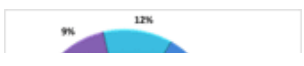
How much seafood does the U.S. import and export? (By volume)



Where do we import seafood from?



Shrimp was our #1 import in 2010 at 1.2 billion pounds. Valued at $4.3 billion, shrimp imports made up almost 29% of value of total edible imports. Over 30% of the shrimp we import comes from Thailand.



Trade

Trade

In 2010, Americans consumed 15.8 pounds of seafood per person, down 0.2 pounds a person from 2009. U.S. consumers spent an estimated $80.2 billion for fishery products in 2010, including $54 billion at restaurants, carry-outs, and caterers; $25.8 billion in retail sales for consumption at home, and $432 million for industrial fish products.

In 2010, imports made up 86% of the seafood eaten in the United States. The United States imported about 5.5 billion pounds of seafood in 2010, an increase of 294.8 million pounds from 2009. 2009 imports were valued at $14.8 billion, $1.7 billion more than 2009. We mainly import from China, Thailand, Canada, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Ecuador. The top species we import (by volume) include shrimp, freshwater fish, tuna, salmon, groundfish, crabs, and squid.

In 2010, the United States exported 2.7 billion pounds of seafood, valued at $4.4 billion, an increase of 185.4 million pounds and $399.5 million from 2009. We mainly export seafood to China, Japan, Canada, South Korea, Germany, and the Netherlands. The major fresh and frozen exports were salmon, surimi, and lobsters; salmon was the major canned item exported.

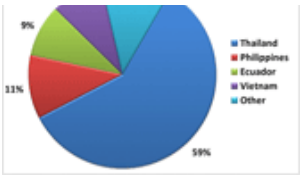
Top 10 Imports in 2010
By Value
1 - Shrimp (Fresh and frozen) - $4.27 billion
2 - Freshwater (Fresh and frozen – fillets and steaks) - $1.14 billion
3 - Salmon (Fresh and frozen – fillets and steaks) - $1.06 billion
4 - Tuna (Fresh and frozen – whole) - $680.2 million
5 – Tuna (Canned) - $659.6 million
6 - Salmon (Fresh and frozen - whole) - $651.6 million
7 - Crabs (Fresh and frozen) - $623.7 million
8 - American lobster (Fresh and frozen) - $596.3 million
9 - Crabmeat (Canned) - $482.9 million
10 - Groundfish (Fresh and frozen – fillets and steaks) - $431.8 million

By Volume
1 - Shrimp (Fresh and frozen) - 1.2 billion pounds
2 – Freshwater (Fresh and frozen – fillets and steaks) - 558.8 million pounds
3 - Tuna (Canned) - 442.4 million pounds
4 - Tuna (Fresh and frozen – whole or eviscerated) - 426.3 million pounds
5 - Salmon (Fresh and frozen – fillets and steaks) - 261.0 million pounds
6 - Salmon (Fresh and frozen – whole or eviscerated) - 227.9 million pounds
7 - Groundfish (Fresh and frozen – fillets and steaks) - 214.8 million pounds
8 - Crabs (Fresh and frozen) - 137.8 million pounds
9 - Squid (Fresh and frozen) - 128.5 million pounds
10 - Freshwater (Fresh and frozen – whole) 120.4 million pounds

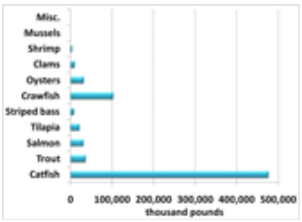
NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology has maintained a **foreign trade database** for several years. The office has developed a series of programs that you can use to summarize U.S. foreign trade in fisheries products for the years 1989 to present.

Aquaculture

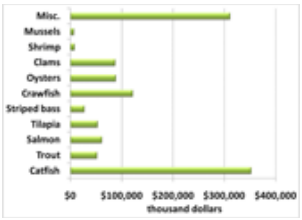
Aquaculture, a.k.a. fish or shellfish farming, refers to the breeding, rearing, and harvesting of plants and animals in all types of water environments, including ponds, rivers, lakes, and the ocean. Researchers and the aquaculture industry are "farming" all kinds of freshwater and marine species of fish and shellfish.



Over half of the canned tuna we import comes from Thailand.



What and how much does the U.S. produce through aquaculture? (By volume)



What and how much does the U.S. produce through aquaculture? (By value)

• **Marine aquaculture** refers to the culturing of species that live in the ocean including oysters, clams, mussels, shrimp, and salmon.
• **Freshwater aquaculture** produces species that are native to rivers, lakes, and streams such as trout, catfish, and tilapia.

Aquaculture is one of the fastest growing forms of food production in the world. Nearly half the seafood eaten around the world is farm-raised. The United States is a major consumer of aquaculture products (importing over 80% of our seafood, with half of that from aquaculture), yet we are a minor producer.

Many other countries are investing more heavily in aquaculture than the United States. According to the latest information from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the United States ranks 13th in total aquaculture production. Global aquaculture production of fish and shellfish is over 50 million tons, valued at almost $100 billion (total U.S. aquaculture production is just under $1 billion annually and supplies only about 5% of the seafood we eat).

Marine aquaculture is just 20% of U.S. production, consisting mostly of shellfish (e.g., oysters, clams and mussels). Only a handful of U.S. farms grow marine finfish such as salmon in Maine and Washington State and yellowtail and Pacific threadfin (moi) in Hawaii. About 70% of aquaculture in the United States is freshwater farming of catfish and trout.

A compelling case can be made for growing more seafood in the United States. Aquaculture, as a complement to wild harvest fisheries, can help meet the growing demand for seafood, reduce our dependence on imports, and help rebuild our wild fish stocks. Domestic aquaculture is also critical to maintaining an infrastructure in coastal communities to support both commercial fisheries and aquaculture and all of the jobs associated with the seafood industry.

As a federal agency under the U.S. Department of Commerce, NOAA is one of the primary agencies charged with permitting and overseeing aquaculture. The **NOAA Aquaculture Program** fosters sustainable aquaculture that will create employment and business opportunities in coastal communities; provide safe, sustainable seafood; and complement NOAA's comprehensive strategy for maintaining healthy and productive marine populations, species, and ecosystems.

Page last updated: September 13, 2011