

Introduction – Atlantic salmon



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Introduction

Atlantic salmon are caught, farmed and consumed on a global scale. World production has more than doubled in the last ten years (up 63% from 2007 to 2016), and this growth is led by Norway, Chile, United Kingdom and Canada¹. Within the EU, the vast majority of Atlantic salmon comes from aquaculture, with the United Kingdom remaining as the main producer of farmed Atlantic salmon (91% of the volume in 2016)¹. In Europe, figures for Atlantic salmon production in 2016 were 1,678,447 tonnes².

The EU is very dependent on the rest of the world for salmon, since it imports 80% of its supply from third countries, and 80% of that from Norway. Imports from China are on the increase, but this is actually Norwegian salmon which has been filleted and frozen in China³. Given the size of the industry, it is even more important to recognise Atlantic salmon as sentient beings that need to be provided with a good quality of life in a farmed environment.

Compassion in World Farming's Atlantic salmon resources outline the issues and make recommendations on improving welfare in producing salmon from the seawater phase up to harvest and slaughter.

Firstly, there is a welfare issues table outlining how farming practices may affect physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing and natural behaviours in Atlantic salmon.

The next resource is our recommendations, explaining succinctly the main recommendations Compassion advocates for rearing this species as well as measure their welfare. There then follows a more detailed document explaining the scientific data with which we base these recommendation upon. Both resources explore the issues based on a “good housing”, “good feeding”, “good health” and “opportunity to express appropriate behaviour” format. After this, the welfare outcomes in sea cages resource summarizes the best ways of measuring animal welfare during the rearing phase.

All animals farmed for food should be humanely slaughtered by being effectively stunned, rendered instantly insensible, and remaining unconscious until death supervenes.

The final section of this pack of resources focuses on humane slaughter, from crowding to killing, and includes slaughter welfare issues and guidelines for minimising stress and pain in Atlantic salmon. It also includes welfare indicators to monitor the effectiveness of the slaughter process from harvest through to stunning and killing.



¹ https://www.eumofa.eu/documents/20178/137160/Atlantic+salmon_31-1.pdf

² <http://feap.info/index.php/data/>

³ https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/sites/fisheries/files/docs/body/salmon_en.pdf