

Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture, 9 December 2014

Shopped: Net Closes on Fishy Salmon Labelling

New fish labelling laws will force retailers to display more specific information about the provenance of salmon and other fish. The [EU Fish Labelling Regulations](#) come into force across Europe on Saturday (13 December) [1]. To coincide with the tightened rules, the Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture (GAAIA) is launching a consumer campaign called "[Shopped: Fishy Salmon Labelling](#)" [2].



"Buyer beware: salmon is farmed and dangerous," said Don Staniford, Director of [GAAIA](#). "The vast majority of fresh and smoked salmon on sale in supermarkets and restaurants is factory farmed not caught in the wild. Sadly, people are still ignorant about the health and environmental risks of farmed salmon. Fake salmon - even so-called '[organic](#)' and [RSPCA-certified 'Freedom Food' farmed salmon](#) - should be avoided like a nasty dose of Winter Flu. Say no to [artificial colourings](#), [cancer-causing contaminants](#) and [15% fat](#) by giving farmed salmon the fish finger this festive season."

GAAIA will be asking consumers across Europe to support the campaign by visiting retailers to monitor compliance with the new Fish Labelling Regulations. Consumers will be encouraged to take photos and send in case reports showing breaches of the labelling regulations. For more details visit [online here](#)

"People now possess the power to demand detailed information about the salmon they're buying," continued Staniford. "Consumers wishing to protect their own health as well as the health of the environment and wild fish should steer clear of farmed salmon. Go wild for fish this Christmas by boycotting farmed salmon from Scotland, Norway, Ireland, Canada, Chile, the Faroes, New Zealand, Australia and the United States."

GAAIA wrote yesterday (8 December) to the EC's [Director General for Health and Consumers](#) and [Director General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries](#) requesting that fish labelling laws be extended further to include artificial colourings (as is already the case in the

[United States with 'Color Added' labels on farmed salmon](#) fed on Canthaxanthin - E161g - and Astaxanthin), contaminant and chemicals levels; lice-infestation burdens and other environmental information [3].

In April, GAAIA won a victory in the UK when [Tesco were forced to axe an advertising campaign](#) for 'Scottish salmon'. In August, [Protect Wild Scotland](#) wrote to the Competition & Markets Authority alleging "[systemic failures](#)" in the marketing of farmed salmon.

In October, Wirral Trading Standards ruled that Sainsbury's breached salmon labelling laws following a complaint filed by GAAIA. Last year, [Sainsbury's were twice found guilty of breaching advertising laws](#) following complaints filed by the Salmon & Trout Association with the Advertising Standards Authority.

For details on the differences between farmed and wild salmon read Protect Wild Scotland's [complaint](#) and [backgrounder](#) to the Competition & Markets Authority [online here](#)

For more information about the health risks of eating farmed salmon read [online here](#)

For more information about the environmental risks of salmon farming read [online here](#)

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Notes to Editors:

[1] In England, DEFRA published [The Fish Labelling \(Amendment\) Regulations 2014](#) via a Statutory Instrument on 21 November 2014. "The information to be provided identifies species of fish on sale, and explains how the fish was produced and where it was caught," states DEFRA's [Explanatory Note](#). "In addition, it ensures that information voluntarily provided is clear and unambiguous and can be verified."

In Wales, the Welsh Assembly published [The Fish Labelling \(Wales\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2014](#) on 19 November 2014. "The information to be provided allows consumers to understand what species of fish they are buying, whether the fish was caught or farmed, and where the fish was caught or farmed," states the [Statutory Instrument](#).

In Northern Ireland, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety published [The Fish Labelling \(Amendment\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2014](#) on 19 November 2014.

In Scotland, the Food Standards Agency launched a [consultation](#) on the new regulations in September 2014. The FSA [advised](#):

Furthermore, the current requirement to provide information on where a fish has been farmed or caught will become more specific. The revised requirement is for information that satisfies a tighter definition of the country of origin of farmed fish and a more precise definition of catch area for fish caught at sea.

The EU Regulation also encourages Food Business Operators to provide additional voluntary information, provided that it is clear, unambiguous and verifiable. It suggests that information of the following types would be particularly helpful:

- Date of catch / harvest
- Date of landing or information on the port of landing
- More details on the fishing gear
- Vessel's flag state
- Environmental information
- Ethical/social information
- Production techniques and practices
- Nutritional content

If such information is provided, there is a legal requirement to ensure that it can be verified, and to ensure that it is not displayed to the detriment of the space available for mandatory information. Local Authorities are empowered to enforce this requirement.

Read a copy of EU Regulation No 1379/2013 on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products [online here](#)

EU Regulation No 1379/2013 includes:

"In order to enable consumers to make informed choices, it is necessary for them to be provided with clear and comprehensive information on, inter alia, the origin and the method of production of the products" (p3)

"'retail' means the handling and/or processing of food and its storage at the point of sale or delivery to the final consumer, including distribution terminals, catering operations, factory canteens, institutional catering, restaurants and other similar food service operations, shops, supermarket distribution centres and wholesale outlets" (p4)

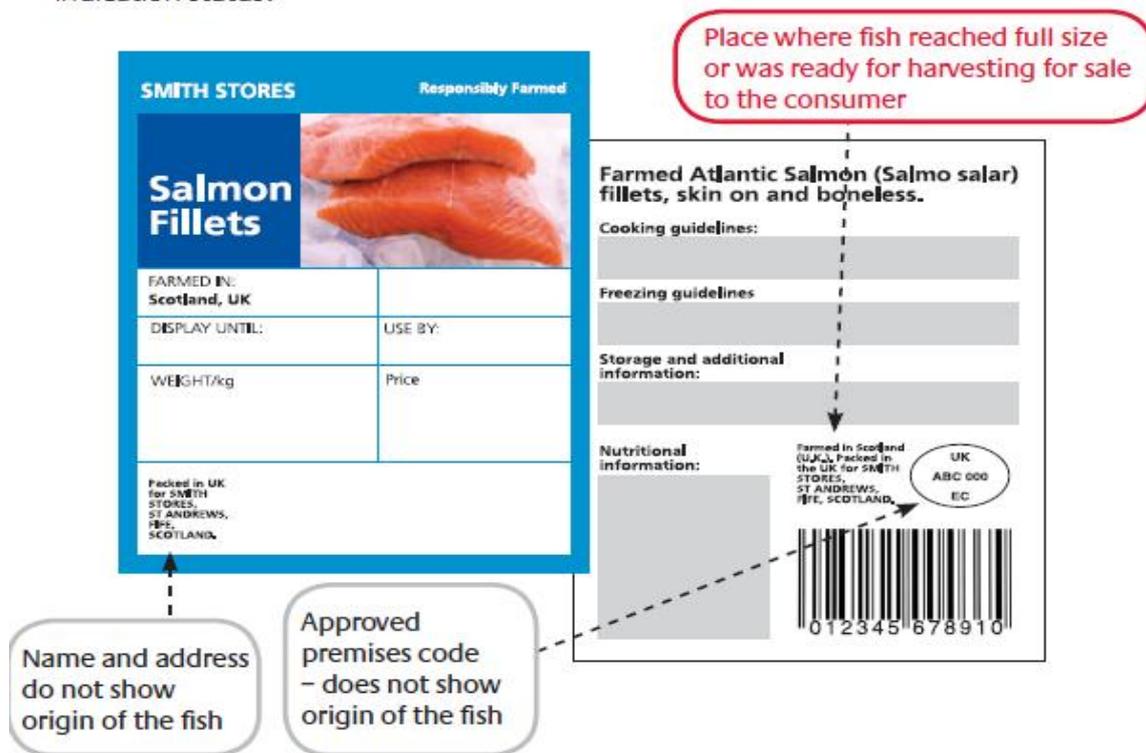
The new rules will mean that labelling on aquaculture products should state the Member State or third country in which the product reached more than half of its final weight or stayed for more than half of the rearing period (read more via "[EU adopts new fish labelling rules](#)").

A [factsheet published by the Food Standards Agency](#) in 2010 provided more specific details on the Country of Origin Labelling:

Farmed and cultivated products:

The label must show the EU Member State or non EU country in which the product reached full size or reached a stage ready for 'harvesting' for sale to the final consumer. For example, where a fish started its life farmed in one country e.g. France and was finally farmed in another e.g. Iceland, the country of origin would be Iceland.

Some products may show an EU Protected Food Name e.g. "Scottish Farmed Salmon" and "Arbroath Smokie" have been granted Protected Geographical Indication status.



Read more via the European Commission's "[A pocket guide to the EU's new fish and aquaculture consumer labels](#)"

[2] For more details visit www.salmonfarmingkills.com/shopped

[3] Download GAAIA's letter to the EC's Director General for Health and Consumers [online here](#) and download GAAIA's letter to the EC's Director General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries [online here](#)

For more background on artificial colourings in farmed salmon read "[Ugly In Pink: Cosmetically Challenged Farmed Salmon](#)"

For more background on contaminants in farmed salmon read "[Farmed Salmon: A Threat to Your Child's Health](#)"

For more background on the environmental impacts of salmon farming read "[The Five Fundamental Flaws of Salmon Farming](#)"