

## Farmed Shrimp Purchasing Policy

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### **Why create a purchasing policy for farmed shrimp?**

Shrimp accounts for over 25% of all seafood consumed annually in the U.S. Despite its popularity, the farmed shrimp industry has a poor environmental record – issues include the destruction of important habitats, disease outbreaks and heavy use of antibiotics, among others. This purchasing policy for farmed shrimp establishes standards that are intended to stimulate environmental improvements throughout the industry while satisfying consumer demand. This is a win for the environment, a win for business and a win for the consumer who values high quality, great tasting, and environmentally friendly shrimp.

#### **What environmental issues does the purchasing policy address?**

The purchasing policy addresses the key environmental impacts of shrimp farming, by requiring farmed shrimp producers to:

- Protect sensitive wetland areas, like mangroves, by requiring that farms are above the high tide line;
- Operate and site their farms in compliance with all local and national laws, and not impede the access of local communities to public resources;
- Use no groundwater, and protect and monitor the quality of groundwater and soils;
- Meet stringent health standards for contaminants like PCBs, ensuring that shrimp they produce are safe to eat regularly;
- Use fewer wild fish in shrimp feed, helping conserve ocean fish stocks;
- Eliminate escapes of farmed shrimp into the environment;
- Eliminate the use of antibiotics, other antimicrobials and pesticides;
- Eliminate the use of genetically engineered shrimp;
- Use best practices to prevent disease and prevent the spread of disease to other farms or wildlife;
- Reduce water pollution by treating all effluent;
- Stock farms only with hatchery raised shrimp;
- Strictly limit the control of wildlife predators at shrimp farms; and
- Demonstrate compliance with the purchasing policy through annual public reports and third-party audits.

### **How are Wegmans and Environmental Defense ensuring that the standards outlined in the policy are implemented and what demonstrates success?**

Performance-based standards are the best way to show on-the-water improvement in aquaculture. Wherever possible, the standards require farmed shrimp producers to meet tough performance metrics and targets. Participating suppliers are required to produce an annual public report demonstrating their compliance with the purchasing standards; compliance is then verified by a third party auditor.

### **How big of an impact will the purchasing policy have on the shrimp farming industry?**

By demonstrating both the environmental and business benefits of comprehensive environmental standards for farmed shrimp production, we expect that the policy will set a new bar for the industry and be utilized by other retailers and farms.

### **Are there any other standards like this in the marketplace?**

As far as we know, these are the most comprehensive and rigorous environmental standards for farmed shrimp that have been adopted and implemented by a major US retailer.

### **How does this project relate to the Aquaculture Dialogues coordinated by WWF, and other NGO efforts to promote better aquaculture practices?**

This project is complementary to other leading efforts to reduce the environmental impacts of aquaculture production. The purchasing policy demonstrates the technical feasibility and business benefits of setting tough standards for the key environmental issues related to farmed shrimp production. Environmental Defense is involved in the Aquaculture Dialogues and other efforts to improve aquaculture practices worldwide, and the innovations developed through this project will be made available to these other initiatives.

### **Is the policy publicly available for other companies to use?**

Environmental Defense's policy is to work with market leaders, to create "ripple effects," motivating other companies in the same sector to make similar environmental improvements. With Wegmans leading the way, we encourage other purchasers of farmed shrimp to adopt this purchasing policy and work with their suppliers to meet the required standards. The purchasing policy is available on our website at [www.environmentaldefense.org/shrimp](http://www.environmentaldefense.org/shrimp).

### **How are shrimp produced under these standards ranked by the Environmental Defense and Monterey Bay Aquarium consumer seafood guides?**

Environmental Defense shares a common seafood ranking system with the Monterey Bay Aquarium. According to the criteria developed by their Seafood Watch Program, when all of the standards are met, the shrimp will meet the criteria for the "green" or best choice ranking. These criteria are used to rank seafood identified in Environmental Defense's Seafood Selector, a guide to fish choices that are good for you and the ocean (<http://environmentaldefense.org/seafood>).

Environmental Defense, 257 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010  
1-800-684-3322 • [members@environmentaldefense.org](mailto:members@environmentaldefense.org) • [www.environmentaldefense.org](http://www.environmentaldefense.org)  
Austin • Boston • Boulder • New York • Oakland • Raleigh • Washington  
Project offices: Los Angeles • Sacramento • Bentonville, AR • Beijing

### **What about wild shrimp? Which is healthier and better for the environment?**

Both farmed and wild shrimp production have significant environmental impacts. Environmental Defense is working with relevant stakeholders in both areas to create better production and harvest methods that minimize the environmental damage. In addition to our work with Wegmans to create new farmed shrimp standards, we are working with shrimp fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico to implement a “catch share” program to create market incentives for high-quality, environmentally friendly shrimp and improve harvesting practices to reduce bycatch and habitat destruction. Read more about our work in the Gulf on our website at <http://environmentaldefense.org/page.cfm?tagID=659>.

### **Is Environmental Defense receiving funds from the companies involved in this project?**

Environmental Defense does not accept payment from our corporate partners. The funding for this work comes from private foundations and individual donors. Our policy on corporate donations is available on our website at <http://www.environmentaldefense.org/page.cfm?tagid=1099>.

Environmental Defense, 257 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010  
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