



Genuine Alaska Pollock

GENUINE ALASKA POLLOCK

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Alaska pollock?

One of the world's most popular fish, Alaska pollock is the largest food fishery in the world and is used in over 1,000 products around the globe. Many people have enjoyed it in high quality breaded fish portions, fish sandwiches, fish sticks, value-added seafood entrées and surimi seafoods. A member of the cod family, Alaska pollock is caught in the wild and is known for its white meat, flaky texture and mild flavor. Seafood product manufacturers, restaurants and consumers appreciate Alaska pollock's quality, performance, versatility, sustainability, and overall value.

What benefits am I passing on to my students when I serve once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock?

Genuine Alaska Pollock offers a healthy way for students to get all the essential amino acids they need to meet their daily protein requirements. In addition Alaska pollock supplies omega-3 fatty acids that are essential to brain and retina development in children, as well as providing other health benefits. Because Genuine Alaska Pollock is top quality seafood, not only will students like its taste and texture, they will come back for more. Serving Genuine Alaska Pollock will improve students' health now and help them establish good eating patterns to carry into adulthood.

Is Alaska pollock available through the USDA Food program?

Yes. Once-frozen, whole muscle Alaska pollock fillet blocks are available for further processing as a USDA Food.



Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers
www.greatfishforgreatkids.org

©2014 Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers



What does “once-frozen” mean? Aren’t all seafood products sold to schools “once-frozen?”

In Alaska, Genuine Alaska Pollock is processed immediately after harvest, so it is frozen only once. This technique preserves the flavor, texture and nutrients in the fish, and makes for top quality seafood meals. In many other whitefish fisheries, fish are caught on the boat, dressed and frozen whole, and then shipped to processing plants, often in China, where they are thawed, filleted and then frozen again. Anything that is frozen twice will suffer greatly in quality, including loss of flavor, moisture, protein, and oxidization of fats. In addition to this quality loss, some manufacturers will try to mask lesser quality by the addition of additives, which are not used in once-frozen products. Of course, twice-frozen products cost less, but once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock is still affordable for schools and offers better value.

Are once-frozen Alaska Pollock products caught and processed in the United States?

All once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock products are caught and processed in the state of Alaska. Alaska pollock are wild fish that grow strong and healthy in the pristine Alaska environment.

Can once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock products be traced to their point of origin?

Yes. Genuine Alaska Pollock products offer complete traceability from the product in your school kitchen all the way back to the boat the fish was harvested on, the location in the ocean where the fish was harvested, and the time and date of the harvest. Many other seafood products do not provide this level of safety and security.

Are once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock products made from minced fish pieces?

Once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock is available in both whole muscle and minced forms. Customers generally prefer the texture and flavor of whole muscle products. The quality of both whole muscle and minced once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock is superior to its twice-frozen seafood products in the same formats.

There are lots of fish products available for schools. How do I know which ones are once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock? How can I verify that my kitchens and warehouse are receiving the once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock product I specify on my bid?

To ensure that you are getting top quality once-frozen Genuine Alaska pollock:

1. Specify only once-frozen Alaska pollock products and the United States as the country of origin. For additional assurance, specify that the product include the GAPP logo on the label, which certifies you are purchasing high quality, American-harvested and processed seafood products.

*Great Fish
for Great Kids!*

2. Specify a particular product by manufacturer and product code, and allow no substitutions by your distributor. It is also important to educate your kitchen staff to check for exact product codes and to refuse substitutions at the school kitchen. The Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers (GAPP) can assist you in identifying suppliers of once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock upon request.

I am concerned about the state of the world's oceans. Are stocks of Alaska pollock healthy?

The Alaska pollock fishery is recognized as one of the most well-managed in the world and is a model for others. This comprehensive management system requires conservative harvests, protection of the ecosystem, and monitoring by federal observers to ensure compliance. In addition, the fishery has been independently certified as sustainable by both the Marine Stewardship Council and the Alaska Responsible Fisheries Management Program.

How does once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock compare to cod in quality and price?

Cod is available in both once-frozen and twice-frozen products, both of which are currently more expensive than once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock. Because once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock is of higher quality than twice-frozen cod, it represents an excellent value.

What are the sensory indicators of a quality, once-frozen fish product?

A high quality once-frozen fish product should have a sea-fresh flavor, with no off odors, or flat or "fishy" flavors. The texture of once-frozen fish products should be flaky and moist, not mushy or dry.

I'd like to serve more quality fish on my school menus but need ideas on how to introduce once-frozen Alaska Pollock products to my students. Can you help?

GAPP has a number of resources and ideas about how to make seafood successful in your schools. Contact us or go to www.greatfishforgreatkids.org.

What resources are available from GAPP to assist me in sourcing and sampling high quality, once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock?

We are here to help. If you are having difficulty sourcing or sampling once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock, please contact us and we will assist you.

Does GAPP provide menu and recipe resources?

Yes! GAPP has developed a number of great school foodservice recipes and menu ideas using once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock. Please contact us to receive copies.

*Great Fish
for Great Kids!*



Genuine Alaska Pollock

ALASKA POLLOCK: A USDA FOOD

Frequently Asked Questions

Alaska Pollock is being offered as a USDA Food. What kind of fish is it?

One of the world's most popular fish, Alaska pollock is the largest food fishery in the world and is used in over 1,000 products around the globe. Many people have enjoyed it in high quality breaded fish portions, fish sandwiches, fish sticks, value-added seafood entrées and surimi seafood products. A member of the cod family, Alaska pollock is caught in the wild and is known for its white meat, flaky texture and mild flavor. It should not be confused with Atlantic pollock, which has darker meat and a stronger flavor.

Why is USDA offering Alaska Pollock for school meal programs?

Alaska pollock is a great source of lean protein and provides many nutrients that are essential for a child's development. The USDA's 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends that seafood be consumed twice a week. The Institute of Medicine's school meal recommendations and USDA's Healthier U.S. School Challenge criteria advise an increased use of lean proteins such as fish and chicken.

Is Alaska Pollock a high quality fish?

Yes. USDA has specified that only once-frozen Alaska pollock is purchased under the program. This is the highest quality Alaska Pollock available on the market. It also guarantees that the fish is caught by U.S. boats and processed in the United States, either on the boats, or at plants near the fishing grounds. Fish is a delicate protein, and freezing only once maintains its high level of nutrients, delicious flavor and delicate texture.

Aren't all fish caught and processed in the United States?

No. Some commercial seafood products are caught by foreign fishing fleets, minimally



processed and frozen, then shipped to China, thawed, processed into blocks and frozen again. Manufacturers also buy these blocks to make commercial products for schools. If schools want seafood that is processed in the United States as required in the Buy American clause of the National School Lunch Act, they should specify this in their bids or purchase USDA Alaska pollock.

Are there significant health benefits to adding high quality fish to the diet?

Yes. Continuing research shows that children can benefit greatly by including fish in their diets. Specifically, studies have shown that seafood consumption can be beneficial in children's brain and retina development; and can reduce the risk of obesity, diabetes, allergies, mental disorders, ADHD, and behavioral problems.

Is Alaska Pollock a good value for my USDA Foods entitlement dollars?

Yes. Products made with once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock meet the protein recommendations for school meal patterns. The protein is highly digestible, low in fat and provides a number of essential nutrients. Breaded Alaska pollock items also now meet the whole grain or whole grain-rich requirements.

Students and staff sometimes complain that they don't like the fishy smell and taste of fish entrees. Will once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock products be different?

Student taste tests show that kids love the taste of once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock. High quality fish and shellfish should never smell or taste "fishy." If you staff or students complain that the cafeteria smells bad when fish is served, then the product that you are buying is of inferior quality or has been handled incorrectly at some point in the supply chain.

Where can I find more information about fish recipes, marketing and staff training?

The Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers is committed to providing a wide range of information and support for schools. These include sourcing information, recipes and menu concepts, merchandising resources and nutrition information. Check our website for the most up-to-date information:

www.greatfishforgreatkids.org.

*Great Fish
for Great Kids!*



Genuine Alaska Pollock

SAMPLE FOR SUCCESS

High quality, once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock adds top quality protein, essential vitamins and menu variety to school meals. Fish may not be a staple on home menus, so it's usually more challenging to introduce students to quality fish options on your school menu than it is to introduce chicken or pizza products.

The key to a successful introduction is to get delicious once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock into students' mouths before the entrée hits the serving line. Use a sampling program to share the upcoming menu choice with your students. Following are a "sampling" of ideas that have been successful in school districts across the country to introduce students to new food items like once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock.

Sample Protocol 1—Cafeteria-Based

Choose a spot where you can display one fully prepared entrée item with its condiments and also offer a small taste of the fish portion of that entrée. Good spots include in the cafeteria line near where the daily hot entrée is picked up, or near the cash register, where the cashier can encourage students to try a sample. The display and samples can also be passed on a tray while the students are eating.

- A. Order the once frozen, Genuine Alaska Pollock product of your choice prior to the sample day. Cook a few portions ahead of time to determine the oven temperature and time that achieves optimum product quality.
- B. At least two weeks before the item is on the menu, set up a fully completed entrée serving where students can see it clearly. If condiments will be offered with the entrée, position all choices, in portion cups, close to the entrée. Maximize the visual impact of the display, focusing on



freshness and color. Use signage advertising “Coming Soon: and the name of the entrée.” Set up a new display for each lunch period if necessary to maintain the fresh appearance.

- C. On the day of the sample, prepare enough fish portions so that students can sample a 1-inch to 2-inch piece of fish. Samples may be pre-portioned into 2-ounce portion cups, set on a sheet pan or in a hotel pan and placed in a heated holding cabinet. (Once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock products have been successfully held up to two hours in a hot holding cabinet. Check occasionally to see if the product is drying out – if so, cover with foil that has been vented with holes so that product can be kept moist without steaming which makes the breading mushy.)
- D. Place sample fish portions next to the display entrée and signage. Encourage students to take or be given a sample. If possible, offer (and let the students choose) a favorite condiment with the fish portion, such as salsa or ranch dressing.
- E. Obtain feedback from students. Place a flip chart by the cafeteria exit. Attach a felt pen on a string. Draw a line down the center of the paper. On one side draw a smiling face – “I like it.” On the other side draw a frowning face “I don’t like it.” Instruct students to indicate their choice with a check mark or an “X”.

Sample Protocol 2—Student Focus Group

- A. Use a student club, marketing class, leadership class or other existing student group representing a cross section of your school’s student population.
- B. Focus groups may be set up to sample the entire entrée or just the fish with optional condiments, depending upon the size of the group. Be sure to show students a display of the entire entrée if you are just sampling the fish portion and the condiments. Focus groups are most successful when you allow students to choose their own condiments.
- C. Be sure to do a cook test on the product prior to the sampling as in Sample Protocol 1, Letter A above.
- D. Obtain feedback and use it to tailor the entrée and condiments to students’ taste preferences. If the group is small, use individual written feedback. Feedback questions used in previous tests include:
 - Rate the appearance (what does it look like?) on a scale of 1 to 5
 - Rate the texture (what does it feel like in your mouth?) on a scale of 1 to 5
 - Rate the taste on a scale of 1 to 5
 - How could we make this item better?
 - What should we serve with it?
 - Is this something you’d like to see on the lunch menu?
 - If your friends asked you your opinion about this food, what would you say?

*Great Fish
for Great Kids!*



Genuine Alaska Pollock

SOURCING QUALITY FISH PRODUCTS

Specification Components

Including the following components in your fish product specifications ensures you will receive the highest quality fish for your students:

Both the finished product and raw material will be of U.S. origin and both origins will be clearly noted on box or outside label—This assures compliance with the Buy American provisions of federal child nutrition law. The Buy American provisions require that seafood products be caught and processed in the United States. Currently, some products produced for schools meet these provisions and some do not.

For those products that meet the provisions, fish is caught and processed into fillets, fillet blocks or minced fish in American waters by American processors. These raw materials are then purchased by American companies for processing into finished fish products.

Other seafood products marketed to schools are made from fish are caught in foreign waters, such as Russia, and are processed into blocks in another foreign country, often China. Foreign caught and processed raw materials are then sold to American companies for processing into finished fish products. USDA has clarified that this process does not meet the intent of the Buy American provision.

Current labeling regulations allow products to be labeled "Made in USA" if the finished product is manufactured in the United States, regardless of the origin of the raw material. To ensure compliance with the Buy American provisions, request the origin of both the finished product and the raw material and verify that both were produced in the United States.

Product processed from once-frozen fish—Specifying once-frozen products ensures that fish caught in American waters is processed and frozen into fillets, blocks or minced fish on the boat, or in a processing plant close to the fishing ground – hence the term "once-frozen."



Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers
www.greatfishforgreatkids.org

©2014 Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers



Fish caught in foreign waters is often minimally processed (heads, tails & entrails removed) and frozen for shipment to a foreign processor. The foreign processor thaws the fish, fillets it, forms it into blocks and freezes it again. This process results in a “twice-frozen” product. Repeated thawing and freezing lowers the overall quality of the fish, degrades flavor and texture, and can result in reduced student participation. In most cases, additives are used in twice-frozen products to mask the negative effects of this process. These additives increase the water content of the product, which makes it cheaper and lessens the quality.

Pollock products will show the Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers logo on the outside of the case—

To ensure that you are receiving top quality, sustainable, once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock, request that the Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers (GAPP) logo (shown at the top of the page) be displayed on each case. The GAPP Chain of Custody program tracks products from the boat to the finished product to ensure that all products with the GAPP logo are high quality, once-frozen and harvested and processing in the United States. This program is audited by the U.S. Department of Commerce for compliance. Warehouse or kitchen staff members need only look for the logo to know that the product received is, indeed, the once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock product specified in your bid.

Indicate product percentages of fish, coating and fillers—Typically, once-frozen fish will have a higher percentage of edible protein to coating. Excess breading is often used to mask undesirable texture and flavor of twice-frozen raw material and results in a finished product with less protein and other favorable nutrients.

*Great Fish
for Great Kids!*



Genuine Alaska Pollock

CHAIN OF INTEGRITY PROGRAM

The Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers (GAPP) Chain of Integrity program was developed to assist school districts in identifying and specifying high quality seafood products that meet the Buy American provision of the National School Lunch Act, which requires that all seafood products must be harvested and processed in the United States.

The GAPP program assures that any Alaska pollock products bearing the Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers logo are made from once-frozen seafood that was caught and processed in Alaska. When school districts specify seafood products with the GAPP logo, schools are assured that these products meet the Buy American provisions and are once-frozen for the highest quality. The logo on the product case also ensures that the seafood ordered by the school district is the same product received at the kitchen door.

How the program works

Manufacturers submit their once-frozen seafood products for independent audit by the Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers. The program requires a “chain of custody” showing all of the processing steps the product goes through and how it is separated from any twice-frozen products in the processing plants. If this chain of custody passes all requirements, the processor is certified and allowed to mark its once-frozen Alaska pollock with the GAPP logo. The program is audited by the U.S. Department of Commerce to ensure compliance.

Background on processed seafood products

The seafood market is truly global and can be confusing. The name Alaska pollock can currently be used on products that originate in Alaska and Russia. Both once-frozen and twice-frozen products are available to schools and they are not always labeled as such, so it is difficult for schools to know where their fish is coming from and how it has been processed.



Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers
www.greatfishforgreatkids.org

©2014 Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers



As an example, Alaska pollock can be caught either by Russian fleets or American fleets. When caught in Russia the fish is usually minimally processed (headed and gutted) at sea and frozen whole (first freezing) on the boat. The whole fish are then sent to China where they are thawed, filleted and processed into a standard block that is frozen (second freezing). These twice-frozen blocks are shipped to the United States where they are cut into individual products that are breaded and battered. Even though the fish is harvested and processed in foreign countries, if breading occurs in the United States, current labeling law allows the finished products to be labeled "Product of USA." Therefore, "Product of USA" labeling does not ensure compliance with the Buy American provisions for child nutrition programs.

Fish is a fragile protein and loses moisture and quality the more it is processed. Quality studies comparing once-frozen Alaska pollock fillet blocks to twice-frozen pollock fillet blocks caught in Russia and processed in China show that once-frozen blocks are superior to twice-frozen blocks in over 40 quality characteristics, including better flavor, aroma and texture. In addition, twice-frozen products can contain additives such as tri-polyphosphates to add back the moisture lost during the double freezing process.

Sourcing high quality, once-frozen seafood

The best way to ensure that your school is receiving U.S.-harvested and processed, once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock is to specify the use of the GAPP logo in all your bids and purchases. Additional specification components for sourcing quality fish products and a list of current suppliers of once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock is available from the Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers. Please call (206) 913-3930 or email info@alaskapollock.org for more information.

*Great Fish
for Great Kids!*



Genuine Alaska Pollock

ZONE MERCHANDISING FOR SEAFOOD

Zone merchandising¹ is a marketing concept that uses the physical areas within your cafeteria and surrounding spaces to influence student perceptions and buying decisions. The technique captures your customers' attention and builds their interest from the time they leave their class until they return to class. It can be used to pique student interest in a product or program, supply nutrition information, or educate them about food sources. The concept is adaptable to every school and campus setting and is an ideal showcase for director and staff creativity.

Merchandising fish, unfamiliar ethnic foods, or fruits and vegetables takes a different approach than merchandising familiar favorites, such as pizza, hamburgers or chicken nuggets. Zone Merchandising is ideal for promoting healthful food choices that do not currently enjoy high profile popularity.

Determine Merchandising Messages

A variety of positive seafood messages can be conveyed to students using the Zone Merchandising concept. For example:

Fresh (ocean, whole fish, mountains, rivers)
Alaska fish comes from a beautiful, wild and natural place.

Fun (whimsical fish, surfers) Fish is fun!

Delicious (students enjoying fish, food photography) Fish is tasty and kids like it.

Real (fishing boats, fishermen) Fishing is an exciting job – Fishermen bring fish to you.

Sustainable (fishing boats, fishermen with fish) Fish from Alaska is sustainable.

Healthful (food photography, nutrition messages) Fish is good for you in many ways.



¹ The Zone Merchandising concept was presented by Ideas with Bounce (www.ideaswithbounce.com). GAPP has developed merchandising ideas and incentives for seafood to be used with this concept.



Identify Your Zones

Any area between your customer and their dining experience provides a merchandising opportunity, or zone. To identify your zones, follow your customer's route to and from the dining area scanning all of the spaces your customer sees – walls, ceiling, floor, display cases, reader boards etc., and all spaces where you may be able to use merchandising. Evaluate each zone and choose the best merchandising approach.

Zone 1 – Entry/Approach

Usually a hallway, this is the first place customers become aware of merchandising. This is an area for larger graphics without many (or any) words. It is an excellent place to introduce the idea of fish. Focus on the Fresh, Real and Fun aspects of fish, fishermen, and the ocean.

Zone 2 – Café Entrance

At the Café Entrance, the customer begins to focus on food choices. Use large graphics here; and remind students that fish is a menu option that day. Continue focusing on the Fresh, Real and Fun messages.

Zone 3 – Order Zone

"Lead" your customers to a particular area where you are serving the fish. Laminated floor decals, directional wall signs, free-standing sign holders and ceiling dangles work well here. A tasting/sampling station may also be effective. Focus on Fresh, Delicious and Fun messages, adding in pictures of food and students enjoying it.

Zone 4 – Line Standing

While students are waiting in line, focus on pictures and information on the fish item you are serving. Posters of students eating fish, or close-up food photography are also effective when placed on posts, walls or laminated and placed on the floor or dangling from the ceiling. Trivia relating to fish and educating the student about the nutrition or source of the fish is also a good choice for this zone. Focus on Fresh, Delicious, Fun, Healthful, Real and Sustainable messages.

Zone 5 – Serving Line

Table top posters, nutrition information, ceiling dangles, and sneeze guard clings all work well in this zone. Staff members are merchandisers too - supply them with special aprons, whimsical hats and/or pins promoting fish.

*Great Fish
for Great Kids!*

Zone 6 – Cashier Line

Use this zone to award prizes for answers to Fish Trivia or for Lucky Trays. “Fishy” prizes are best. Incentives, such as fish-shaped stickers, could also be handed out to those selecting a fish meal. Don’t forget to dress the cashier to merchandise fish also.

Zone 7 – Dining Areas

Wall spaces around the dining tables are great spaces for large graphics and banners. Focus on Fresh, Fun, Real, and Sustainable messages.

Zone 8 – Trash/Tray Return

Posters or ceiling dangles can be effective here. Focus on Fun, Real, and Sustainable messages.

Zone 9 – Café Exit

This may be the same as the entrance. If it’s not, use large graphics focusing on Fresh, Real and Fun messages.

Zone 10 – Out to Recess or Back to Class

Again, utilize the larger graphics focusing on Fresh, Fun and Real messages to reinforce the dining experience and pre-sell the next day.

The Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers have a number of merchandising resources for use in your Zone Merchandising Program. Contact us at (206) 913-3930 or info@alaskapollock.org for more information.

*Great Fish
for Great Kids!*



Genuine Alaska Pollock

RESOURCES FOR FISH NOVELTIES

Oriental Trading Company

www.orientaltrading.com

(800) 875-8480

Display & Costume

www.displaycostume.com

(888) 562-4810

Bargain Balloons

www.bargainballoons.com

(866) 330-1272





Genuine Alaska Pollock

PRODUCT SOURCING GUIDE

The following companies offer once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock products for schools through the USDA Food Program:

High Liner Foods

(including American Pride, Fishery Products, Icelandic Seafood, and Viking brands)

Contact: Ned Hawkins

Telephone: (978) 750-5276

Email: ned.hawkins@highlinerfoods.com

Trident Seafoods

Contact: Ryan Richardson

Telephone: (206) 783-3818

Email: ryanr@tridentseafoods.com

For recipes and merchandising ideas, contact:

Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers

Telephone: (206) 913-3930

Email: info@alaskapollock.org

www.greatfishforgreatkids.org



WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

Committed to Your Success with Seafood

The Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers is an association of 14 U.S. seafood companies that harvest and process Genuine Alaska Pollock. We are dedicated to improving the experiences school children have with seafood by helping schools source quality products and offering seafood meals that kids love.

For recipes, sources and creative ways to include more seafood on your school menu, visit our website:

 www.greatfishforgreatkids.org

 [Great Fish for Great Kids](#)

 [@Pollock4Schools](#)



*Great Fish
for Great Kids!*

Genuine Alaska Pollock



*Great Fish
for Great Kids!*

A HOW-TO GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS

Everything you need to know to **make seafood kids love!**



Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers

P.O. Box 9968

Seattle, WA 98109

(206) 913-3930

info@alaskapollock.org

www.greatfishforgreatkids.org

www.alaskapollock.org

A USDA Food • Harvested and Processed in the U.S.A. • Certified Sustainable

WHY SEAFOOD?

It's a Nutritional Necessity

Two Meals a Week: The USDA, FDA and EPA advise that children of all ages consume at least two meals of seafood per week. Not only does seafood provide high quality complete protein and many vitamins and minerals, it is also low in saturated fat and is a source of omega-3s, a specific type of polyunsaturated fatty acids.

Found Only in Fish: The body needs omega-3s, but is unable to make them itself, so they must be obtained from our diet. The two types of omega-3s most important for our health, EPA and DHA, are found almost exclusively in fish and shellfish.

Essential for Good Health: EPA and DHA are crucial for good health and healthy development. Numerous scientific studies have shown a positive link between the consumption of seafood and heart health. They have also been shown to support the healthy development of the brain and retinas.

Schools Can Help: There has never been a better time to include more nutritious seafood on your school menus. Recent reports by the USDA have specifically noted that Americans are not getting enough seafood in their diets, and schools are in a great position to help children get the seafood they need.

WHY ALASKA POLLOCK?

Wild, Pure, Nutritious, and Sustainable



It's Nutritious: Genuine Alaska Pollock is the perfect nutritional package. It offers complete protein, is low in fat, and provides 344mg of omega-3 fatty acids per 100g, plus a wealth of important vitamins and minerals. It beats other animal proteins by offering more protein and less fat, saturated fat and cholesterol per serving.

It's Wild: A member of the cod family, Alaska pollock is harvested in its wild habitat — the pristine waters of Alaska's Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska.

It's Pure: Unbreaded once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock® has no additives — it's 100% fish. Both Alaska public health officials and the FDA recommend unrestricted consumption of Alaska pollock for everyone, including young children. Furthermore, the American Heart Association includes pollock in its list of popular fish that are low in mercury.

It's Local: American fishermen are recognized by the USDA as "farmers" of the sea, making them important partners in Farm to School initiatives. Schools can designate Alaska as their source for local seafood to meet 'buy local' initiatives.

It's Sustainable: This natural, wild fish is one of the most abundant food fish in the world. The sustainability of Genuine Alaska Pollock is recognized the world over and certified by two internationally recognized organizations — the Marine Stewardship Council and the Alaska Responsible Fisheries Management program. Alaska pollock also has a lower carbon footprint than all other land-based proteins.

USDA RECOMMENDS
2 servings
OF SEAFOOD
PER WEEK



ALASKA POLLOCK IS
the largest
CERTIFIED
SUSTAINABLE
FISHERY IN THE WORLD



HOW TO SOURCE

For Quality – Ask for Alaska

Start with the USDA: One of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to source Alaska pollock is through the USDA Food program. Schools can rest assured that the specification for USDA Alaska pollock is very stringent. It requires that all products be made of once-frozen, whole Alaska pollock fillets with no chemical additives. Top quality seafood products like these are appreciated by students and are more likely to become menu favorites.

When you buy Alaska pollock products commercially, there are a number of key specifications you should always include on your bid:

Buy American: The fish in pollock products for schools could be from the United States or imported from Russia. For the best quality and nutrition, and to meet the requirements of the Buy American provision of the National School Lunch Act, specify that the fish be harvested and processed in the United States.

Require Whole Fillet Products: Fish sticks and other processed fish products can be made with whole fillets or minced fish. Whole fillet products are moister, flakier and more flavorful than those made with minced fish.

Specify Once-Frozen: Frozen seafood products are available once-frozen or twice-frozen, indicating the number of times the fish has been thawed and frozen before reaching your schools. Once-frozen Alaska pollock has a fresh, clean flavor that is never “fishy.” It also has a bright white color and flaky texture, making it a seafood product that students will enjoy again and again. Twice-frozen pollock is usually harvested in Russia, and then processed in China. It is less moist, less flavorful and has a mushier texture than once-frozen fish. It also delivers less of the important nutrients that kids need.

USDA PURCHASES
the highest
quality

ONCE-FROZEN
ALASKA POLLOCK
FOR SCHOOLS
USDA FOOD



ONCE-FROZEN *vs* TWICE-FROZEN

STEP 1 Caught by catcher boat or catcher/processor.
STEP 2 Processed immediately into fillet blocks, IQF fillets, or surimi, then frozen.

STEP 1 Caught by catcher boat or catcher/processor.
STEP 2 Headed, gutted and frozen.
STEP 3 Shipped to processing plant.
STEP 4 Thawed.
STEP 5 Processed into fillets or fillet blocks and frozen a second time.

HOW TO SERVE

Think Outside the Stick

To enliven your menu and excite students about fish, offer entrées beyond a plain fish sandwich or fish sticks with tartar sauce. Genuine Alaska Pollock products are extremely versatile and adaptable to a wide variety of menu concepts.

Use Favorite Flavors: Introduce new offerings by substituting fish as the protein in your students' favorite items. If they love Spicy Chicken Sandwiches – they will love a Spicy Alaska Pollock Sandwich. If tacos are high on their list, try an Alaska Pollock Taco or wrap.

Go Naked!: Breaded fish isn't the only option. Unbreaded Genuine Alaska Pollock is a delicious, nutritious, lean protein choice. Try our recipes or create your own to offer a wider variety of seafood menu items in your schools.

Try Ethnic Trends: Take a look at what students are eating outside of school and capitalize on ethnic trends and restaurant-style preparations. Genuine Alaska Pollock is served at many restaurants that are popular with kids.

DOWNLOAD RECIPES
THAT MEET THE *latest meal pattern* GUIDELINES
www.greatfishforgreatkids.org



ALASKA POLLOCK
BAJA SALAD



CRANBERRY-GLAZED
ALASKA POLLOCK WITH
QUINOA STUFFING



ALASKA POLLOCK
SPRING ROLLS



ALASKA POLLOCK
PROVENÇAL

HOW TO PREPARE

It's Quick and Easy

Seafood is a delicate protein and care must be taken to cook it well. Unlike many processed proteins, seafood products are often not pre-cooked, so follow these guidelines: Breaded products should be cooked so the breading is crispy and the internal temperature is 165°F. Unbreaded portions are done when they look opaque and just begin to flake. The internal temperature should just reach 165°F.

Do not overcook!

Suggested temperatures and cooking times may vary based on the type of equipment in your kitchen. To ensure the best results, perform a cook test to determine the proper temperature and cooking time prior to service.

BASIC COOKING METHODS

Alaska pollock can be cooked in a regular or convection oven.

PROPERLY COOKED SEAFOOD
SHOULD BE *moist and flaky*, NOT DRY AND RUBBERY.
IF IT'S A BREADED PRODUCT, IT SHOULD BE CRISPY ON ALL SIDES.

Baking on a Sheet Pan (breaded or unbreaded fish)

1. Prepare a sheet pan with parchment paper or cooking spray and add **frozen** Alaska pollock portions.
2. Bake according to manufacturer's instructions and to an internal temperature of 165°F. Unbreaded portions should be opaque and just beginning to flake. Breaded products should be crispy on all sides. For extra crispy breaded fish, cook on a wire rack on top of the sheet pan.

Roasting/Steaming in a Hotel Pan (unbreaded fish)

1. Add water to the bottom of a hotel pan; approximately ½ cup for a half-size pan and approximately 1 cup for a full-size pan.
2. Add **frozen** unbreaded Alaska pollock portions; cover with lid or foil.
3. Cook for half the recommended time, and then remove lid or foil.
4. Continue cooking until the water has evaporated and the internal temperature is 165°F.



HOLDING

Because seafood cooks quickly, it lends itself to the “Just-In-Time” cooking method, where food is prepared as you need it. As an example, if you will serve 20 Alaska pollock sandwiches for each of three lunch periods, the highest quality will be achieved by preparing 20 sandwiches prior to each period, as opposed to preparing 60 and holding them over the three lunch periods.

If you do need to hold cooked seafood for a short period of time, remember to test your holding times!

COOKING TIPS

1. Do a cook test with a few portions ahead of time.
2. Evaluate the cooked product. The seafood should be moist and flake easily; it should not be dry and rubbery. The breading should be crispy on all sides and free from cracks or “blow outs.”
3. Make adjustments as needed!

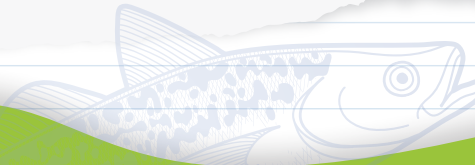


TROUBLESHOOTING

	Poor quality product	Using a twice-frozen product	Cooking temperature is too high	Cooking temperature is too low	Cooking time is too long	Cooking time is too short	Not enough moisture during cooking
Dry, rubbery texture	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Breading cracks or “blow outs”	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Mushy breading		✓		✓			
Fishy taste or smell	✓	✓					

“This is why I love the Alaska pollock items so much. Even though they are breaded you break them open and they look like real fish, not a compressed nugget that has been ground and formed.”

Carlee Wells,
Food Service Director,
Petersburg City School District



5 STEPS for UNDERSTANDING FISH ALLERGIES

Fish is an important part of a balanced diet.¹

However, a recent USDA study concluded that 80 to 90 percent of Americans are not consuming enough seafood, and are missing out on all the health benefits fish has to offer.² Fish provides complete lean protein, omega-3 fatty acids and other important nutrients to fuel students and school staff for success.³

Luckily, 99.6% of the population can consume finfish without any problem,⁴ and an allergy to shellfish does not necessarily mean an allergy to finfish. If a student or staff member has been diagnosed with a known fish allergy, however, collaborative efforts should be taken by school staff and parents to help avoid a potential reaction.



Following are some helpful tips for navigating the waters of fish allergies:

1 Less than 1 Percent

Although one of the major food allergens identified by the FDA,⁵ finfish is responsible for allergies in just 0.4% of the population.⁶

Fish allergies are also less common in children than adults.⁷

2 Know Your Fish



If a student or staff member has been diagnosed with a known fish allergy, he or she may be allergic to more than one type of fish. Halibut, salmon, and tuna are most commonly associated with finfish allergies,⁸ but caution should still be taken with all types of fish until the specific allergy has been determined by a medical professional.

3 Recognize the Symptoms



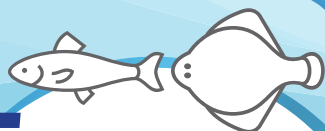
Fish allergies can manifest themselves differently for each person, but the most common symptoms include: hives, flushed skin, tingling or itchiness in the mouth, swelling, vomiting and/or diarrhea.⁹

4 Tips on Avoiding a Reaction



If a student or staff member has been diagnosed with a known fish allergy, the best ways to avoid contact with fish and a possible reaction include: reading food labels, avoiding "cross-contact" with other prepared foods that might contain fish, educating yourself about the early warning signs of an allergic reaction, and seeking treatment immediately if symptoms do occur.¹⁰

5 Not all Fish are Created Equal



An allergy to one fish does not necessarily mean a student or staff member is allergic to all fish.¹¹ It is best to practice caution if a known fish allergy is present, but with proper education and testing, certain types of fish may still be enjoyed for their taste and nutritional benefits.

This document is for educational purposes only. Please direct any questions or suspicions of a fish allergy to a board-certified allergist or trained medical professional. For more information, please see the sources listed to the right, or visit: www.greatfishforgreatkids.org.

Glossary¹²

Fish: Used as a collective term, includes finfish, mollusks, crustaceans and any aquatic animal which is harvested.

Seafood: Any fish caught for human consumption.

Finfish: Fish species with backbones and fins; not including crustaceans, cephalopods or other mollusks.

Shellfish: Shellfish include both mollusks, such as clams and mussels, and crustaceans, such as crabs and lobsters.

Sources

¹ Harvard University T.H. Chan School of Public Health. (2017). *Fish: Friend or Foe?* Retrieved from <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/fish/>

² U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2015). *Consumers Missing Out on Health Benefits of Seafood Consumption*. Retrieved from <https://www.ars.usda.gov/news-events/news/research-news/2015/consumers-missing-out-on-health-benefits-of-seafood-consumption/>

³ Washington State Department of Health. (2017). *Health Benefits of Fish*. Retrieved from <http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Food/Fish/HealthBenefits>

⁴ Food Allergy Research and Education. (2017). *Food Allergy Facts and Statistics for the U.S.* Retrieved from <https://www.foodallergy.org/file/facts-stats.pdf>

⁵ U.S. Food & Drug Administration. (2016). *Food Allergies: What You Need to Know*. Retrieved from <http://www.fda.gov/Food/IngredientsPackagingLabeling/FoodAllergens/ucm079311.htm>

⁶ Op. cit. 4.

⁷ Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Connection Team (FAACT). (2017). *Fish*. Retrieved from http://www.foodallergyawareness.org/foodallergy/food_allergens-11/fish-31/

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Op. cit. 5.

¹⁰ U.S. Food & Drug Administration. (2016). *Frequently Asked Questions about Food Allergies*. Retrieved from <https://www.fda.gov/Food/IngredientsPackagingLabeling/FoodAllergens/ucm530854.htm>

¹¹ Op. cit. 7.

¹² National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. (2006). *NOAA Fisheries Glossary*. Retrieved from <https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st4/documents/FishGlossary.pdf>



Genuine Alaska Pollock

USDA ALASKA POLLOCK FISH STICKS

Frequently Asked Questions

I'm not familiar with Alaska pollock. What can I expect the new USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Sticks to look and taste like?

Alaska pollock is a whitefish and a member of the cod family. Caught in the wild off the coast of Alaska, it has flaky white meat and a mild flavor that most kids will love. The USDA fish stick is made with once-frozen whole Alaska pollock fillets that have been deep-skinned. Deep skinning removes all of the dark meat from the fillet, so when students bite into the fish sticks, they will see only bright white meat inside. The USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Stick also has a crispy whole grain breading. One serving provides a two-ounce equivalent for lean meat/meat alternates, and a one-ounce equivalent for whole grain or whole grain-rich products.

How should the USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Sticks be handled prior to cooking?

USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Sticks should be stored in the freezer and kept frozen until you are ready to cook them.

What is the best way to cook the USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Stick?

For best results, the USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Sticks should be batch cooked just prior to serving. Batch cooking ensures that the breading remains crispy and the fish is not overcooked. It is best to test a few fish sticks prior to service to see how you might need to adjust temperatures or cooking times to achieve the best results with your equipment.

To cook a batch of fish sticks, preheat your convection oven to 400°F or your



Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers
www.greatfishforgreatkids.org

©2017 Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers



conventional oven to 475°F. Oven temperature is very important and will greatly affect the appearance and texture of the cooked product! Spray a sheet pan with cooking spray or line it with parchment paper. Place the frozen fish sticks on the tray, allowing space between each one. Cook for 9 to 13 minutes or until breading is crispy and the internal temperature just reaches 165°F. Do not overcook!

What is the best way to hold USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Sticks?

It is best to minimize holding times with breaded fish products, and batch cooking just prior to service is the best way to do that. If you do have to hold fish sticks, do not cover them, as this will cause the breading to become soggy and it is very likely that the fish will overcook as well.

Where can I find recipes, presentation and menu ideas for the USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Sticks?

The Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers is the producer association for Alaska pollock. Visit our [website](#) for lots of great recipes and menu ideas for the new USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Sticks.

USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Sticks is a new menu item for our nutrition services staff and our schools. What are “Best Practices” for introducing the item to staff and students?

For a quick way to educate your staff about the new USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Sticks, check out [Alaska Pollock: A How-to Guide for Schools](#). It provides a great overview for schools about the nutritional benefits of seafood, the advantages of Alaska pollock, sourcing, menu ideas, and preparation instructions. Each section is designed to be an easy way to train staff about Alaska pollock and the new USDA Fish Sticks.

One of the best ways to introduce new seafood items to students is to sample the product a few days before it is on the menu. Take a look at our [sampling protocol](#) to learn how to sample in your schools.

Are the USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Sticks fried?

No, baking is the preferred cooking method for USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Sticks. During processing, the USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Sticks are par-fried for just a few seconds to set the breading. This process helps keep the breading crispy during baking.

Do USDA Alaska Pollock Fish Sticks really come from Alaska?

Yes! Alaska pollock is caught off the coast of Alaska in the Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska. When you serve this product, you are supporting thousands of U.S. fishermen and processors and their families.

