

Jan 12, 08

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Nutrient rich salmon feeds you right

By Gina Forsyth

It's dinner time and serving pizza, scrambled eggs or grilled cheese sandwiches again will cause a meal revolution. Not sure what to put on the menu? Do your body a favor and reach for farmed salmon.

We already know farmed salmon is a solid source of both Omega 3 and Omega 6 fatty acids (the "healthy fats"), which play a crucial role in brain function, stimulate, skin and hair growth, and maintain bone health. But what you might not know is that our product is a particularly rich source of the B vitamins, providing approximately more than half of your recommended daily allowance (RDA) of niacin and significant amounts of B 12. The B family of vitamins helps to break down carbohydrates into glucose to give you energy. It also plays an important role in how our nervous system works by breaking down fats and proteins.

Farmed salmon is also low in sodium, often a concern these days. One hundred grams of cooked farmed salmon (a three and a half ounce serving) contributes approximately only 2% of your RDA of sodium and a mere 90 calories.

It also gives you more than 15% of an adult's RDA of both Vitamin D and phosphorus as well as a source of copper, magnesium, and thiamin (another B Vitamin).

Food Safety Manager Jean Veale said recently that Marine Harvest introduced nutritional testing in 2006 based on increased consumer desire to know more about the foods they eat. In 2007, due to the merger, corporate nutritional testing did not occur, however, that has now changed and semi-annual testing is now in place. Testing at different times of the year will take into account any seasonal differences such as higher feed consumption due to increased growth in spring and summer, and cooler water temperatures and less feed consumption in the fall and winter months.

Testing of wild Norwegian salmon for nutrient content was performed in 2007 at the same independent lab Marine Harvest used for testing of corporate fish. Sample sizes and test protocols were identical. Results show comparable numbers between the farmed and wild fish.

Coming later this year or by early 2009 the Marine Harvest website will have available nutritional values provided in the same table format already seen on many grocery-store food labels, added Veale.

Note: Nutritional information is based on a 100 gram serving (three and a half ounces). RDAs are approximate.