

canadian sea scallops



Species Name: *Placopecten magellanicus*

Marine Stewardship Council Certified since March 2010

Harvest Area / Season: Canadian Sea Scallops are harvested in FAO Area 21 (Atlantic Northwest) in NAFO sub-areas 5Zc, 4VWX, and 3P. The fishery is conducted on a year-round basis commencing on January 1 of each year.

Assessing Stock Health: There is a rigorous scientific program for scallops with an extensive scientific survey program conducted jointly by the Canadian Department of Fisheries & Oceans (DFO) and Industry. Each Bank is sampled on an annual basis. Detailed fishery dependent data such as catch rates, meat counts, and spatial information from satellite tracking are also used to scientifically determine stock abundance and composition. Resource status is updated annually and forms the basis for management of the fishery.

Sustainable Removals: Fisheries in Canada are managed under the Precautionary Approach, meaning that removals must be set at levels that ensure the stock maintains high productivity and that overfishing does not occur. The Canadian offshore scallop fishery is managed on the basis of a system whereby each of the licences in this fishery receives a percentage share of an annual Total Allowable Catch (TAC) set by DFO. Clearwater controls approximately 50% of the quota for offshore scallops. The quota is set annually based on results from scientific assessments and has fluctuated around a long-term average of 6,000 tonnes.

Participating in Research: Clearwater participates in research through joint industry-government scientific surveys and a 100% industry-funded dockside-monitoring program. These programs provide core information for assessing resource status. Clearwater also leads an industry initiative in geo-spatial mapping of the ocean bottom, providing detailed information about bottom contours and habitat types that has been incorporated into the scientific assessment of scallops, leading to an improved understanding of the resource. In addition to the standard annual scientific surveys done jointly with government, industry has conducted a series of more detailed grid surveys that allow a more accurate definition of scallop distribution leading to better precision in designing management measures.



This product comes from a fishery that has been independently certified to the MSC's standard for a well-managed and sustainable fishery.
www.msc.org, MSC-C-51561



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Conservation & Management Measures: In addition to mandatory government controls such as annual quota levels, minimum meat counts, dockside monitoring and satellite tracking, industry employs several voluntary measures, such as more stringent minimum size rules and closures to protect juvenile scallops.

Monitoring Catch: Electronic monitoring devices have been installed on all offshore scallop vessels and provide real time electronic monitoring. Industry sponsors 100% dockside monitoring and the at-sea observer coverage program that provides information to DFO on catches.

Managing Bycatch: Clearwater takes an active approach to appropriately manage non-target species, or bycatch. Ongoing research and technological improvements such as the introduction of bottom mapping, have contributed to significant reductions in groundfish bycatch in recent years.

In the offshore scallop fishery, an at-sea observer program is in place to independently monitor bycatch levels in the fishery. Bycatch of cod, haddock, and yellowtail are calculated and accounted for within the quotas for these stocks, ensuring overall removals are sustainable. Clearwater vessels also track bycatch on a continuous basis and follow a protocol whereby a vessel moves out of an area if bycatch becomes higher than acceptable levels. Our ongoing gear research program is testing additional modifications to further reduce bycatch below already low levels.

No bycatch species represents more than 5% of the catch and this fishery does not interact with marine mammals, sea birds or turtles.

Fishing Method and Gear Type: Scallops are harvested with a bottom contact gear called the New Bedford scallop rake or drag. In order to harvest scallops in an offshore environment, fishing companies must employ modern and sophisticated vessels that are capable of deploying fishing gear into depths up to 100 meters. In order to harvest the scallops from the seafloor, the gear must come into contact with the bottom where the scallops are living. Dive capture is not feasible in this environment.

The scallop rake is deployed in a responsible manner such that the fishery remains sustainable. Sensitive bottom habitats of deep sea corals in the vicinity of the fishery have been identified and coral protection areas have been closed since 2002. In cooperation with DFO, annual groundfish spawning area closures are put in place to mitigate disturbance and bycatch of cod and yellowtail during this sensitive period.

At the same time as sensitive areas are being protected, strategies are implemented to mitigate ocean bottom impacts in fishing areas. Bottom mapping technology has reduced the overall towing time and amount of bottom covered by the rakes by accurately identifying the gravel habitat where scallops are found. Captains are able to accurately target scallop habitat while leaving other surrounding habitats undisturbed. Clearwater seeks to improve our operations and conducts ongoing gear research to identify areas for further innovation and technological advancements in gear. We have already made great strides in reducing the footprint of the offshore Canadian sea scallop fishery.



Traceability: Our freezer vessels are capable of shucking, measuring, grading and freezing our scallops within an hour after harvest. The catch is entered into our traceability system and can be tracked throughout the entire Clearwater supply chain.



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