Washington Farmed Salmon: Good for you. Good for your community.
Farming the ocean dates back to the Ancient Egyptians and the Aztecs, but we’re farming for the future. Now more than ever, with a growing world population, fresh water conservation issues, and arable land constraints, aquaculture is making a vital contribution to global food needs. Washington’s salmon farmers are your friends and neighbors. And Cooke Aquaculture is bringing economic prosperity and year-round jobs to our coastal communities while producing one of the healthiest foods in the world.

Washingtonians are proud of their traditions of working on the water and farming the land.

Aquaculture is a ‘not-so-new’ twist on these traditions that takes farming to a familiar landscape we know and love – the ocean.

While aquaculture dates to ancient times, modern salmon farming didn’t get its start in North America until about 40 years ago, right here in the Puget Sound.

The first commercial net pen farm in North America was a Pacific salmon farm in the Puget Sound.

Atlantic salmon farming began in earnest in the Puget Sound after a restocking project for the New England states was called off in the 1980s. Those Atlantic salmon established the farms in the area and our farms have fed Americans ever since.

By adding the Atlantic salmon farming operations in Washington State to its Maine operations in 2016, Cooke took a leadership role in the United States aquaculture sector.

Cooke Aquaculture is the oldest continuously operating salmon farming company in North America. Today, we have farms close to Cypress Island, Hope Island, Port Angeles, and Rich Passage. All of these facilities have operated for more than 30 years.
Our business was built from the ocean floor up.

We’re proud to say that Cooke’s Washington aquaculture sites helped pioneer the global salmon farming industry, and we continue to be recognized as an innovative international leader. Our current infrastructure offers world-class expertise in fish health, environmental sustainability, and industry-leading certification.

From highly skilled farmers, marine biologists and scientists, to engineers, veterinarians and researchers, the men and women of Cooke Aquaculture are world leaders in their fields.

Like all farmers, they are incredibly enthusiastic about what they do. They work hard. They take pride in their work. They are innovators and problem solvers who love to learn and collaborate. They are passionate stewards of the environment who have shared working water fronts with traditional fishermen and tourism operators since the industry began.

Such world-class expertise and industry collaboration are critical assets in a diversified sector that has a proud history, and an even brighter future.

Bringing Prosperity to the Puget Sound.

Aquaculture can create even more jobs at home, generate investment, and renew the tax base in rural communities. We are continuing to build an industry that will offer challenging, stable, full-time work for our young people in their own communities. In fact, our 80 full-time farm employees have been with us, on average, 13.4 years. And we support another 100 jobs on harvesting boats and in processing plants.

Aquaculture has revitalized coastal communities in Maine and Atlantic Canada by creating direct and indirect jobs, supporting small businesses, and stimulating ongoing research and innovation. In the Puget Sound, we put $8.5 million in wages into the local economy each year, and there’s still room for controlled growth in our industry and spin-off sectors in the area.
By 2030, the world’s population is predicted to increase by another two billion. The amount of food that will be consumed in the world in the next 50 years will exceed ALL the food eaten in human history to date. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization forecasts a global seafood shortage of 50-80 million tonnes by 2030.

One answer is aquaculture.

Today, more than half of all fish and seafood consumed in the world originates from aquaculture.

Farmed Atlantic salmon can help meet the growing global seafood demand, and take the pressure off wild stocks. The Puget Sound is an ideal place to farm fish, especially Atlantic salmon. Grown in America to feed Americans.

The U.S. is the world’s 3rd largest market for seafood, but is only the 15th in aquaculture production.

In 2015, the US imported 329,845 tonnes of fresh and frozen salmon valued at $2.5 billion (majority Atlantic salmon). Fresh and frozen exports consisted principally of 206,016 tonnes of salmon valued at $704.9 million (majority Pacific species).*

* US Census Bureau
Farmers know that pristine seawater is essential for the production of healthy, high-quality salmon. Everything we do on a salmon farm is intended to help grow stress-free, healthy fish. Caring for our fish means caring for the ocean, the environment, and for our future.

Each farm’s location is carefully chosen in areas with the right temperature, water depth, and currents. Farmers follow strict codes of practice to ensure their fish are healthy, properly contained in their pens, and waste is managed responsibly.

- Just like farms on land, salmon farms are fallowed regularly, and the environment under and around the farms is regularly monitored.
- Salmon farmers use underwater cameras and sensors to monitor feed delivery to avoid overfeeding.
- Farmers have tailored feed to suit the dietary needs of salmon at each life stage, improve feed digestibility, and significantly reduce waste.
- Divers inspect the fish, the cage systems, and the ocean floor on a weekly basis.

We take care of our ocean.
Salmon Farming Facts.

Responsible farmers - Growing healthy fish in a healthy marine environment.
Salmon occupy less than 4 percent of the space in their net pens. This helps protect the health and welfare of the fish, leading to a healthier environment and a higher quality product.

A food choice to feel good about.
Our ocean farms are stocked with certified, disease-free smolts and our salmon are not genetically modified. No artificial dyes or growth hormones are used. Ever.

Salmon are feed conversion champions.
Sometimes salmon, like any animal, get sick. If they do, veterinarians may prescribe an antibiotic treatment. Farmed salmon require far fewer treatments than other types of livestock and our salmon never get antibiotics as a prevention. A lengthy withdrawal period between treatment and harvest ensures the final product is safe and healthy.

Cooke Aquaculture participates in third-party certification programs that evaluate and audit the farming facilities and practices - both marine and on land - as well as feed manufacturing and fish processing to ensure quality seafood and responsible production.

Atlantic salmon products can be traced back to the original farm and hatchery where the fish were raised, including records of what they ate and how the farmer cared for them.

Because salmon spend their lives in the water, they can turn more of the food they eat directly into growth. It takes about 1 kg of feed to produce 1 kg of farmed salmon, compared to the conversion ratio for beef at 10:1 or chicken at 2:1.
Our salmon farmers are experts in closed containment because our fish spend the first third of their lives in land-based hatcheries where recirculation systems are used. We know that closed systems may work on some species for their entire life cycle. We also grow our broodstock, or parent fish, in these systems. But right now, it’s not economically viable, environmentally friendly, or in the best interests of fish welfare to grow Atlantic salmon to market size on a commercial scale in these systems.

A number of challenges must be overcome, including water and land usage, real costs of energy, and considerations around animal welfare, not to mention the quality and acceptance of the product (and its inevitably high retail price) by the consumer.

Our industry continues to invest in technological improvements to land-based salmon farming systems because we recognize its proven technology and its valuable role in the freshwater and early rearing part of the salmon’s life cycle.

However, the evidence provided to date strongly recommends that, at this time, land-based fish farming systems are best suited to the early growth stages of Atlantic salmon. These systems are not the best alternative for the commercial production of the species to market-size.
World-class salmon. Local commitment.

The Puget Sound’s salmon farmers care about the communities where they work and raise their families. Whether supporting local schools with scholarships or collaborating on research projects, our farmers are proud to contribute to the growth and well-being of their communities.

One of the healthiest foods in the world.

Atlantic salmon is one of the healthiest foods you can eat, and it’s available year-round from local farmers. One of the highest sources of heart-healthy omega-3 (DHA, EPA), including Atlantic salmon in your weekly diet can help prevent heart disease, lower cholesterol and blood pressure, boost your brain function, and reduce the risk of cancer, stroke, depression, Alzheimer’s disease, arthritis, Crohn’s disease, and asthma.

Did you know?

- The American, Canadian, and International Heart and Stroke Foundations all recommend eating fish, especially fatty fish like Atlantic salmon, at least twice a week.
- According to a recent study, eating just 3 oz. of farmed salmon a week reduced the risk of death from coronary heart disease by 36 percent.

Learn more about our products at truenorthseafood.com

Atlantic Salmon is a healthy protein:
Low-fat, low-calorie and high in omega-3.

Atlantic Salmon is simple to prepare and available fresh year-round.

Regular consumption of high omega-3 foods can reduce the risk of coronary death by 36% and lower your cholesterol.

Rich in vitamins A, B12 and D, and iron, zinc and phosphorous.