

# NETTING SALES

## FLYING FISH: 2019 BEST-SELLERS

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|------------------|------------|
| 1. Smoked salmon | 4. Haddock |
| 2. Salmon        | 5. Cod     |
| 3. King prawns   |            |

**SALES SMOKIN':** Smoked salmon was caterers' favourite fish in 2019, with hotels, contract caterers and restaurants its biggest buyers. It continues to be utilised as a popular starter, sandwich and 'seacuterie' ingredient. Its popularity is also being driven by on-trend dishes such as Japanese sashimi and Nordic inspired gravadlax. Use at breakfast, the fastest growing daypart across the hospitality industry, has also boosted sales.

**FARMED SALMON FOCUS:** Salmon remains a favourite ingredient for main course dishes. But with wild Atlantic salmon having an MCS 'to avoid' rating, caterers are keen to utilise more sustainable alternatives such as certified farmed salmon and trout.



Use salmon trimmings/leftovers to make fishcakes and burgers, and skin to make fish crisps.

## TOP TRENDS 2019/20

**SUSTAINABILITY GAINS:** sales of sustainable fish products through Direct Seafoods increased by 18% as caterers respond to increasing consumer awareness and demand for options which are kinder to the environment, and this looks set to increase further for 2020.

**PUBS PUSHING GROWTH:** one of the biggest growth areas in fish and seafood sales in 2019 was from the gastropub sector.

**STORY TIME:** strong sales growth of fish products which can tell a story, as caterers try to gain margin on menus from interesting products with strong provenance.

**SUSTAINABLE SEA BASS:** sales of chef favourite wild sea bass have decreased due to restrictions on the fishing of wild-caught fish along with increased awareness of how unsustainable this fish is. Eco-aware chefs are, therefore, migrating to sustainable farmed sea bass. This is great to eat and competitively priced.

**SIZE MATTERS:** there is an increasing demand for strict portion sizes on a variety of species including cod, salmon, haddock and halibut as caterers, who are increasingly under-pressure on costs, seek to keep the species on their menus at a competitive price. This also enables uniformity of offering to keep customers happy.

**WHITE SPECIES CHANGES:** continuing decline in frozen cod and haddock sales where value customers are moving towards other white fish species like frozen pollock, capensis hake and pangasius. These species can be used in popular dishes such as fish fingers, goujons, and fish cakes, as well as served in batter or breadcrumbs as an alternative in the menu classic fish and chips.

## SALES SWIMMERS: TOP 10 FASTEST GROWING PRODUCTS

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|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Meagre                     | 6. Monkfish        |
| 2. Farmed halibut             | 7. Mussels         |
| 3. Farmed turbot              | 8. Haddock         |
| 4. Frozen lobster             | 9. Farmed sea bass |
| 5. Frozen coated fish fillets | 10. Dover sole     |

**MEAGRE SALES:** sales of meagre, a fish farmed in the Mediterranean, grew by 60% with fine dining restaurants, mid-market restaurants, and gastropubs driving its growth, as more chefs discover how versatile and cost-effective this species is. Sometimes referred to as "stone bass" this fast growing large fish has helped to fill the void left by the more unsustainable wild sea bass.

Grill, pan-fry or serve raw as ceviche.



**HALIBUT HERO:** With wild caught halibut a real no-no on menus due to its endangered status, farmed halibut sales are on the rise.



With its meaty texture, halibut works well in seagan dishes.

**MORE SUSTAINABLE MONKFISH:** sales of monkfish, which is perceived as a luxury item, have been on the march with increasing demand from quality pubs and hotels due to its recently improved sustainability rating. Its versatility as a firm meaty fish has made it a great menu option.

Monk-fish works well with on-trend West African flavours.



**PUBS SHOWING SOME MUSSELS:** strong sales growth has been driven by mid-market restaurants and gastropubs who are embracing the good GP potential of mussels.



Serve mussels with rose harissa, chorizo and white wine and lime broth.

**SOLE TRADERS EMBRACING SIMPLICITY:** the mild, sweet flavour of Dover Sole means it is a fish chefs need to do little to, which helps drive its position as a popular classic on restaurant menus. It remains hugely popular as a seasonal special or 'catch of the day' menu offering, with customers confident about the flavour and showing their support for fish caught in British waters.

## CATCHING ON: WHAT'S HOT FOR 2020

**SEAGANISM:** the number of consumers embracing a largely plant-based diet combined with eating some sustainable seafood is set to rise, prompting demand for more small plate, good value seafood recipe ideas.

**FISH BURGERS:** burgers remain one of UK consumers favourite foods, and with some retailers now having their own fish burger range, there are also more opportunities for burger-style seafood menus in the hospitality sector.

**SEAFOOD SKEWERS:** quality kebabs are in demand by customers, including skewers celebrating the fruits of the sea. This is also an opportunity for chefs to use a broader range of species by making mixed seafood kebabs.

**FROZEN PRODUCTS WITH SUSTAINABLE CREDENTIALS:** sales of frozen lines which have certification such as MSC, BAP, ASC and Global Gap accreditations will continue to grow as caterers look for more affordable menu options but with retained confidence.

**RESPONSIBLY SOURCED TROUT:** ChalkStream trout produced in Hampshire has caught top chefs' imagination as a home-grown alternative to salmon, with its beautiful colour, top quality firm meat and all the health-benefits of salmon. It is rekindling British consumers' taste for a great fish that had fallen out of favour over the last decade. Its smoked trout is ideal for helping tap in to the trend for 'seacuterie' on menus.

**YELLOWTAIL KINGFISH (HIRAMASSA):** produced in an amazing high-tech recirculation system in the Netherlands these fish are one of the cornerstones of Japanese food culture, used in sashimi in particular, but also incredibly versatile for other cooking methods and styles including modern Asian cuisine.

**GLITNE HALIBUT:** this sustainably sourced farmed halibut from Norway is being appreciated by chefs for its firm snow-white flesh that is perfect for all styles of cooking.

**FROZEN CANADIAN LOBSTER MEAT:** chefs in fine dining restaurants are embracing its raw meat in dishes due to reduced labour in preparation, but with no detriment to quality.

**GILL-TO-FIN DISHES GROWING:** as well as focusing on serving sustainable species, another trend which looks set to increase further in 2020 is chefs using as much of the fish as they can, rather than just prime cuts. A rising number of UK chefs are utilising fish bones, heads - including cheeks and collars - and offal, to create delicious dishes. This approach is helping to reduce food waste and excite more adventurous diners. Fish collar, the fatty, tender meat tucked between the fish's gills and the rest of its body is among the star performers of this growing trend. The collar is great for grilling or for using in dishes such as terrines. It can also be battered and fried to make delicious fish bites. Offal, including livers and hearts, is popping up in fish pates, while bones are being used to make broths. Fish scraps make for fillings for still on-trend tacos.

**SEACUTERIE CATCHING ON:** The gill-to-fin trend is also helping drive the 'seacuterie' trend, which sees chefs preserving fish and seafood through pickling, fermenting, smoking or ageing. Ageing fish helps to intensify the flavour and improve its texture, with meaty types of fish best for aging. Seacuterie items now being featured on menus include shellfish sausages, crab dips and smoked mussels. This fishy snack trend, which can be served to customers as a charcuterie-style sharing board, looks set to become more widespread on menus.

WHAT'S HOT?

