



Wild, Natural & Sustainable®

Top Merchandising Tactics to Boost Retail Seafood Sales

Amid the past year's turbulent retail landscape, seafood has remained one of grocery's strongest players, catalyzing dramatic category growth by offering solutions to some of shoppers' top priorities in the recent months. Here are four best practices for boosting seafood sales in the grocery store as tides continue to change in the new year.

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LEVERAGING NEW-YEAR HEALTH GOALS

Compounding consumers' annual health-related New Year's resolutions, 2021 brings with it a heightened priority for good-for-you choices as health has become an international concern. And with 76% of consumers saying that healthy options are important to them in choosing where to shop for groceries, according to Ignite data, offering healthier foods provides grocery-store retailers a competitive advantage now more than ever.

Of course, consumers define "healthy" by a number of metrics. In recent years, increasing seafood consumption has been a fast-growing trend among health-conscious

consumers; according to Datassential, 72% of consumers say they choose seafood over other proteins because it's a healthier option. Notably, seafood consumption has increased amid the pandemic: Data from IRI and 210 Analytics found that between March 15 and Oct. 4, 2020, fresh seafood sales grew 32% and frozen seafood grew 30% year over year, outpacing other categories such as frozen foods, meat and dairy in terms of growth.

In short, consumers seeking seafood as a healthy meal option provides retailers with a clear angle to leverage in their merchandising, especially during the beginning of the year: Seafood offers better-for-you options that are both delicious and simple to prepare.

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INSPIRING HOME COOKS

Even as some locales open up their restaurants for dine-in service, many consumers continue to cook at home rather than dine out. According to Technomic's December 2020 Industry Insights report, most consumers say they won't feel comfortable dining on-premise for at least the next six months.

This doesn't mean that consumers aren't looking to treat themselves, however. Especially after months spent social distancing, they're likely more eager than ever to test out a new recipe or try a more premium entree. For many shoppers, seafood affords a more "premium" feel than other common proteins, allowing

retailers to meet the demand for more high-quality entree options at a fair price.

Even more, finding inspiration at the grocery store can help make the sale for seafood. Datassential reports that 35% of consumers cite recipe ideas and suggestions as a motivator to consume more seafood—and, importantly, recipe inspiration is the No. 1 motivator among affluent consumers, with 42% saying it encourages their seafood consumption.

For retailers, there are myriad ways to provide the inspiration their shoppers are seeking. According to Datassential, consumers cite a seafood salesperson at the grocery store and internet resources, respectively, the No. 1 and No.

55%

Sustainability-marketed products are responsible for nearly 55% of the growth in consumer packaged goods from 2015 to 2019

2 sources they turn to most frequently for information. Beyond these options, offering inspiration through in-store signage and recipe cards or through tips and tricks for cooking posted on the retailer's website or social media platforms can be enough to get the ball rolling among home cooks looking to broaden their horizons in the kitchen.



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SEEKING SUSTAINABILITY

While the pandemic slowed down certain sustainable practices by increasing demand for single-use materials, consumers are still prioritizing earth-friendly products in increasing numbers. According to [a 2020 report](#) from New York University's Center for Sustainable



Business in partnership with IRI, sustainability-marketed products are responsible for 54.7% of the growth in consumer packaged goods from 2015 to 2019, and this growth has continued despite the pandemic.

And when it comes to seafood, many consumers are especially careful to seek sustainable options. Technomic's Seafood and Vegetarian report found that 21% of consumers cite sustainability concerns as a deterrent to purchasing seafood.

To meet these demands, retailers can benefit by offering seafood from recognizable, sustainable brands shoppers trust at a glance. Alaska Seafood is a favorite among consumers seeking sustainable options: Datassential reports that 47% of consumers say they associate sustainability with Alaska Seafood. This, in addition to other quality-focused priorities, makes an enormous difference in driving consumers to purchase Alaska Seafood at the grocery store.

OFFERING ALASKA QUALITY

The preeminence of Alaska Seafood within the category is indisputable. Datassential reports that a whopping 79% of general consumers—and 88% of affluent consumers—are more likely to purchase seafood when



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Indeed, quality is the centerpiece for the vast majority of seafood shoppers. Most (83%) say that if a store carries seafood with the Alaska Seafood logo, they can assume that the retailer cares about the quality of seafood it sells, and 75% say they'd recommend buying seafood from that retailer to others. With "safe to eat," "natural" and "superior quality" as the top three descriptors consumers associate with Alaska Seafood, it comes

as no surprise that consumers consider Alaska Seafood-carrying retailers a locus for quality products.

After a year of rapid category growth, retail sales of seafood continue to climb, and Alaska Seafood continues to exceed consumer expectations for flavor, quality and sustainability. To learn more about how Alaska Seafood can help grocers boost sales in the new year, visit alaskaseafood.org.

