

'Not the flake, thanks': choosing seafood wisely

The pocket-sized *Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide*, published by the Australian Marine Conservation Society, is an easy-to-use reference that lists the sustainability status of 60 seafood species available in supermarkets, restaurants and other retail outlets across Australia.

Each species is colour-coded as belonging to one of three categories – 'say no' (red), 'think twice' (amber) and 'a better choice' (green).

The guide provides information for consumers about the status of each fishery based on Bureau of Rural Sciences Fisheries Status Reports, the method used to catch the fish, and whether it is wild-caught or grown in aquaculture.

Red-coded species may be overfished (orange roughy or shark/flake), or the fishing method used may harm other marine animals or birds – for example, longlines used to catch swordfish also snare turtles, sharks, dolphins and seabirds.

The guide also suggests basic questions you can ask at the supermarket counter (e.g. 'is this a deep-sea species?'). It underlines

the importance of seafood eaters knowing whether a product is local or imported. More than 60% of seafood eaten in Australia is imported from countries such as Thailand.

In the absence of any certified labelling scheme, consumers cannot determine at the point-of-sale whether a product has been sustainably caught or farmed.

Will this change? Coles-Myer spokesperson Jim Cooper says the move towards sustainable seafood practices is 'a relatively new area of discussion' in Australia.

'We have been speaking to a number of groups to get a better understanding of the issues involved with sustainable seafood, including the Marine Stewardship Council, the World Wildlife Fund, Oceanwatch, the Australian Marine Conservation Society, the Bureau of Rural Sciences and other government bodies.

'In terms of seafood labelling, we are fully compliant with the new country-of-origin labelling requirements.

'We are also exploring the possibility of

adopting standardised labelling of seafood products.'

In the meantime, arm yourself with this guide, and make your selection sustainable.



Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide
A guide to choosing your seafood wisely
Craig Bohm and Kate Davey

Australian Marine Conservation Society
2006, Paperback – AU\$9.95

Order from the publisher: 1800 066 299,
amcs@amcs.org.au, www.amcs.org.au

Reviewing the organic farming phenomenon

Organic agriculture by definition implies the idea of appropriate farming based on an understanding of the local environment. So why a book with a 'global perspective'?

The book provides a timely view of how organic agriculture is evolving in the face of the challenges from genetically modified crops ...

'Global' here refers to the diverse knowledge and views of scientists and specialists from around the globe, which this book brings together. It's comprehensive reading – 18 chapters comprising contributions from 51 authors, representing more than a dozen countries.

These perspectives demonstrate the shared values underlying the organic farming movement – soil, plant, animal and human health; an ecological systems approach; fairness; and

environmental stewardship – yet also highlight the challenges of adapting common principles to very different sites, environments and cultures.

The book provides a timely view of how organic agriculture is evolving in the face of the challenges from genetically modified crops, an increasing

reliance on tillage and the 'growing industrialisation of the movement' with a global market now valued at \$25 billion a year.

Organic Agriculture is organised into four sections and a final summary:

'Production' provides an overview of soil fertility; crops; crop protection; plant breeding; seed production; animal husbandry and welfare; and ethics.

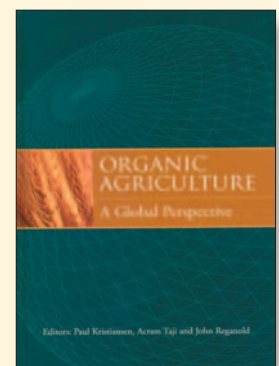
'Regulatory and management issues' explores organic standards and certification; economic management; and understanding the market.

'Beyond the farm gate' discusses environmental and social aspects of organic versus conventional agriculture.

'Knowledge and capacity building' discusses research and education issues.

This is a valuable background reference not only for

teachers, students and researchers, but also for policy makers and others interested in the economic, social and political aspects of organic farming.



Organic Agriculture
A Global Perspective
Eds: Paul Kristiansen, Acram Taji & John Reganold

CSIRO PUBLISHING
2006, Hardback,
ISBN: 0 643 090908 – AU\$150

Available from
CSIRO PUBLISHING:
www.publish.csiro.au
Local call: 1300 788 000