

News release

23 May 2011

Consumers challenged to try UK hake



Catches of Northern hake, landed around the UK, are looking plentiful this season – so Seafish, the authority on seafood, is urging consumers to try this excellent whitefish.

Hake used to be a familiar fish to Britons but seems to have fallen from favour at a time when availability is very good. We only spent £1.5 million on chilled hake in supermarkets in the past year, compared to £124 million on chilled cod (Nielsen retail figures for 52 weeks leading up to 16 April 2011).

Dr Paul Williams, Seafish Chief Executive, said: “With properties similar to cod and haddock, hake is an excellent species to try and it’s very good value for money. We are lucky in the UK that the quality and supply of hake is great – so I’d encourage consumers to widen their range of seafood to include hake this summer.”

Hake, known as ‘merluza’ in Spain, is a Spanish favourite and since the Spanish have the highest per capita consumption of seafood in Europe, they should know what they’re talking about.

Dr Williams continued: “In addition to tasting great, the Omega-3 content for hake is surprisingly high for a whitefish. It is the 12th highest source of Omega-3 in a table published by Seafish, from a total of 41 species tested.”

The latest ICES (scientific) advice for Northern European hake, the stock landed in the UK, is favourable for its sustainability. The Seafish Responsible Sourcing Guide to hake is available at <http://www.seafish.org/media/sustainability/responsible-sourcing-guides>.

Mitch Tonks, fishmonger, food writer and restaurateur, is a big fan of hake:

“Hake is a great favourite in Spain and a lot of ours is exported; we should definitely eat more of it here, it is a lovely whitefish, a real treat to get hold of a chunk as its flesh is soft and delicious. Snap it up when you can.”

Hake can grow quite large, like cod, and can be processed into fillets and steaks and is available filleted or frozen. In Cornwall, the traditional dish of ‘hake and onions’ is still popular.

Best availability for UK-landed hake is May until September. Certified sustainable supply is also available from Southern Africa.

-Ends-

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Notes to editor:

- 1) Seafish, the authority on seafood, was founded in 1981 by an act of parliament and supports the seafood industry for a sustainable, profitable future. Our services range from research and development, economic consulting, market research and training and accreditation through to account management and legislative advice for the seafood industry.
- 2) Mitch Tonks has three restaurants – RockFish Grill & Seafood Market in Bristol, The Seahorse and RockFish Seafood and Chips both in Dartmouth. Find out more www.mitchtonks.co.uk | www.twitter.com/MitchTonks
- 3) Hi res image of Mitch’s hake recipe is available from Seafish upon request.