

EMBARGOED 1 May 2013



Tel 04 385 4005  
Email [info@seaford.co.nz](mailto:info@seaford.co.nz)  
[fishofthemonth.co.nz](http://fishofthemonth.co.nz)

## Fish of the Month: snapper

We are pleased to present to you May's Fish of the Month – **snapper**:



### Snapper – the phenomenal white fish

Snapper is a family favourite for many New Zealanders, and is one of our most popular recreational fish.

While the supply of snapper increases throughout the warmer months, snapper's year-round availability and firm-yet-tender flesh means it is perfect for use in curries and in soups for the coming winter months – good, hearty dishes enhanced with the many health benefits which come from eating seafood.

Snapper not only tastes great, it's a healthy choice. In particular, snapper is a source of selenium, which acts as an antioxidant defence – meaning it helps to protect cells in our body from damage.

More information on snapper, including detailed nutrition information, meal inspiration and sustainability information can be found on the following pages.

Fish of the Month resources for snapper will be available for consumers online at [www.fishofthemonth.co.nz](http://www.fishofthemonth.co.nz) from 1 May 2013.

## Consumer resources available

### Recipe: Fish Dumplings & Bok Choy Soup



This Asian-inspired recipe is a tasty and hearty meal idea, perfect for those colder nights. The soup and wontons reheat with ease, for a scrumptious hot lunch, though we recommend reheating the soup and dumplings separately to ensure the dumplings retain their shape. Yum!

This recipe is available on the final page of this information pack, and can be downloaded from our website [www.fishofthemonth.co.nz](http://www.fishofthemonth.co.nz) from 1 May.

### Submit your recipes

We would love to see your favourite or most creative recipe using snapper – email it to us on [info@seafood.co.nz](mailto:info@seafood.co.nz) and we may profile it for you on the site!

### Purchasing snapper

Snapper is available from seafood stores, supermarkets and many retailers. It can be purchased fresh - whole or in fillets.

### Taste and texture

Snapper is a bit of a rock star in the world of seafood cuisine. It has a mild and delicate flavour which lends itself to a broad range of cooking styles and flavours. It has firm flesh, which means it holds together well in dishes such as soups and curries, while remaining tender and succulent.

Snapper's delicate flavour is the highlight feature of many dishes, raw or cooked. With Asian-inspired cuisine readily available and trending throughout New Zealand, snapper is a species which is also often selected for sashimi, and other Asian dishes such as our feature recipe **Fish Dumplings and Bok Choy Soup**.

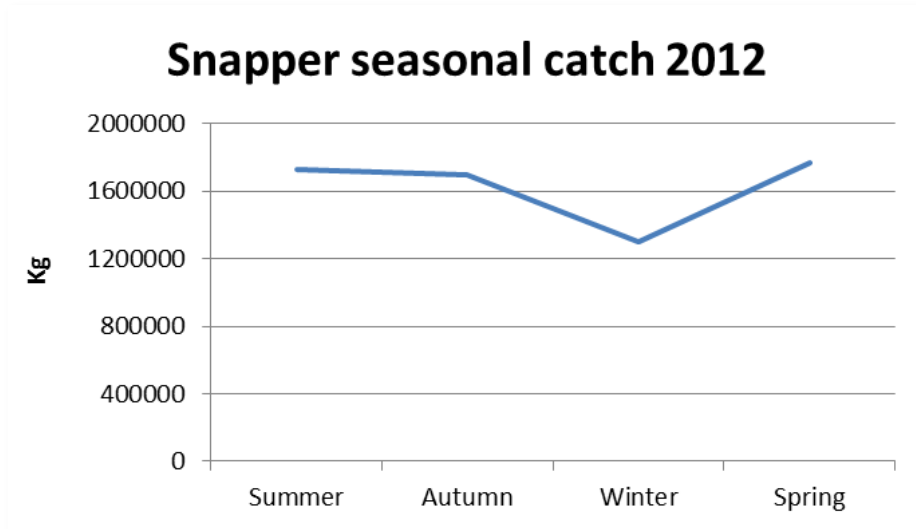
No matter how you serve fresh snapper, its taste will always give you that 'wow' factor.



## Cost and availability

The price of snapper is driven by demand and popularity. Due to its popularity, snapper is often priced at a premium.

Snapper is available year-round, with supply increasing from October to April.



## Nutrition Information

Seafood is a highly nutritious food and is a great source of protein. Many species are low in saturated fat and a number of them are a good source of Omega-3. Seafood also contains many other vitamins and nutrients.

The New Zealand Heart Foundation [recommends](#) that you should have at least two servings of fish or seafood per week.

Snapper is a source of selenium. Selenium is necessary for normal immune system function and for the production of thyroid hormones. It also acts as an antioxidant defence, meaning it helps to protect cells in our body from damage. According to the Ministry of Health, New Zealand soil generally contains low levels of selenium, meaning that much of New Zealand plant-based food is also naturally low in selenium.

Snapper is full of nutrients that are important for our health. It is a good source of vitamin D, which is important for bone health. While the main source of vitamin D is the sun, the widespread use of sunscreen to reduce our exposure to the sun's rays means that dietary sources of vitamin D are becoming increasingly important.

Snapper is also a good source of iodine, vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, niacin and phosphorus and is a source



of thiamin and magnesium:

- **Iodine** – is necessary for the production of thyroid hormones and for normal energy metabolism.
- **Vitamin B<sub>12</sub>** – is important for formation of blood. It is necessary for normal neurological function and contributes to growth and development in children.
- **Niacin** – being one of the B vitamins (vitamin B<sub>3</sub>), niacin is necessary for energy release from food and is necessary for the normal structure and function of skin and mucous membranes.
- **Phosphorus** – assists in the building of strong bones and teeth, and is important for maintaining healthy cell membranes.
- **Thiamin** – also being one of the B vitamins (vitamin B<sub>1</sub>), thiamine is necessary for the metabolism of carbohydrates, and contributes to the production of energy.
- **Magnesium** – is necessary for normal nerve and muscle function and assists with energy metabolism.

Source: Nutrition information data was sourced from the New Zealand Food Composition Database: <http://www.foodcomposition.co.nz/>

### Recommended Dietary Intake

The Recommended Dietary Intake (RDI) is considered to be the average daily dietary intake level that is sufficient to meet the nutrient requirements of nearly all (97–98 per cent) healthy individuals in a particular life stage and gender group.

### *Additional sources*

More information and recipes can be found using the following links:

- [www.seafood.co.nz/health](http://www.seafood.co.nz/health)
- [www.seafood.co.nz/news-and-events](http://www.seafood.co.nz/news-and-events)
- [www.seafood.co.nz/recipes](http://www.seafood.co.nz/recipes)

### Did you know?

Archaeologists have estimated that catches of snapper from the Hauraki Gulf may have reached almost 1000 tonnes a year by 1550.

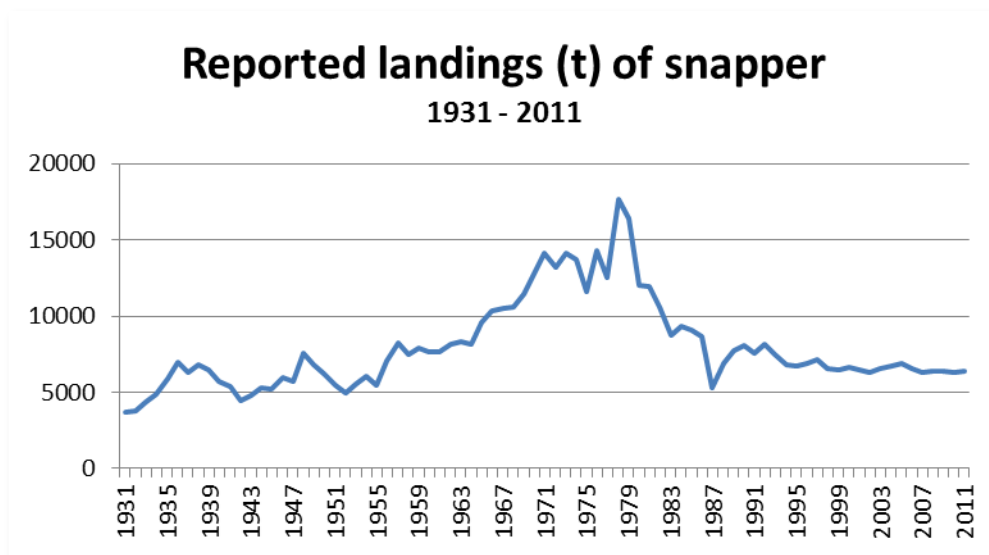


## Sustainability

### QUOTA MANAGEMENT

Snapper is one of New Zealand's largest and most valuable coastal fisheries. The commercial fishery, which developed last century, expanded in the 1970s and peaked in 1978 with the commercial catch estimated at 18,000 tonnes (see graph below regarding catch landings since 1931). By the mid-1980s catches had declined with some stocks showing signs of overfishing. Today, most of our snapper stocks appear to be stable or increasing.

Snapper were introduced into New Zealand's Quota Management System (QMS) in 1986. The QMS sets catch limits that allow the sustainable use of the snapper resource based on stock assessments conducted by government and the fishing industry.



#### Sources

The 1931 – 1943 years are April to March but from 1944 onwards are calendar years.

Data up to 1985 is from fishing returns.

Data from 1986 to 1990 is from Quota Management Reports.

Due to a change from calendar year to fishing year there is no data available for 1983.

The annual commercial catch limit for snapper under the QMS has been set at 6,357 tonnes since 2005. In the 2012 fishing year (ended 30 September), the total actual commercial catch for snapper was 6,547 tonnes caught from seven Quota Management areas. This 2.9 per cent over-catch was offset by various catch balancing mechanisms.

To put this in perspective, the allowed commercial catch for all species in New Zealand is over 585,685 tonnes annually.

The snapper fishery is the largest recreational fishery in New Zealand, and is particularly



popular along both coasts of the North Island. Recreational fishers have limits on the amount of snapper they can catch each day with the limit varying by region.

Commercial and recreational fishers are not allowed to take snapper that are shorter than 25cm to allow them to breed.

## **MONITORING**

Snapper abundance is monitored using commercial catch rates and catch-at-age sampling. Assessments also use trawl survey information and abundance estimates from the recapture of tagged fish.

All stocks appear to be stable or increasing. However all stocks were substantially reduced prior to their entry into the QMS, and rebuilding of stocks in some areas appears to be slow.

## **RESEARCH**

Recreational harvest levels of snapper are uncertain historically but since the mid-2000s have been estimated using aerial surveys of recreational fishing. The Ministry for Primary Industries' Large Scale Multi-Species survey of amateur catch will also provide new estimates of recreational harvest of snapper.

It has been suggested that juvenile snapper are dependent on sea grass beds. The impact of land use and land-based effects on coastal ecosystems including sea grass beds are being actively researched.

## **HARVESTING**

Snapper are caught by long lining, trawling and some set netting. While all these fishing methods have some impact on the environment, including accidental captures of seabirds and marine mammals, significant investment in special technology and improved fishing methods have been made by industry to successfully lessen the impact.

Snapper are the dominant fish in northern inshore areas, attracted to the warmer waters of the North Island and are most abundant in the Hauraki Gulf.

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