



State of Alaska
Fish Monitoring Program
Department of Environmental Conservation
Office of the State Veterinarian
5251 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99507
(907) 375-8200

FISH MONITORING PROGRAM PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

Description:

The ADEC Fish Monitoring Program conducted a survey to learn more about the fish and shellfish Alaskans catch and eat, and the level of concern they have about contaminants in those fish. A ten question survey was developed using [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com), posted to our webpage, and shared by email, Facebook®, and Office of the State Veterinarian quarterly newsletter. This is a summary of the first 50 responses.

Summary:

Based on 50 responses, 86% of people are concerned about contaminants in the Alaskan fish and shellfish they consume. Mercury is the contaminant most on people's minds when they are at the fish counter at the super market or sitting at the dinner table about to enjoy a meal of Alaskan fish. Other heavy metals, radioisotopes, and some organic contaminants are also of concern to some people. While Alaskans enjoy a wide range of fish and shellfish, halibut, salmon, shrimp and bivalves are most commonly consumed, particularly by those who live in urban areas. Consumption in rural areas is more dependent on what is available in that particular region. Fish consumption was common among respondents with 84% of people eating fish at least once a week.

Participation:

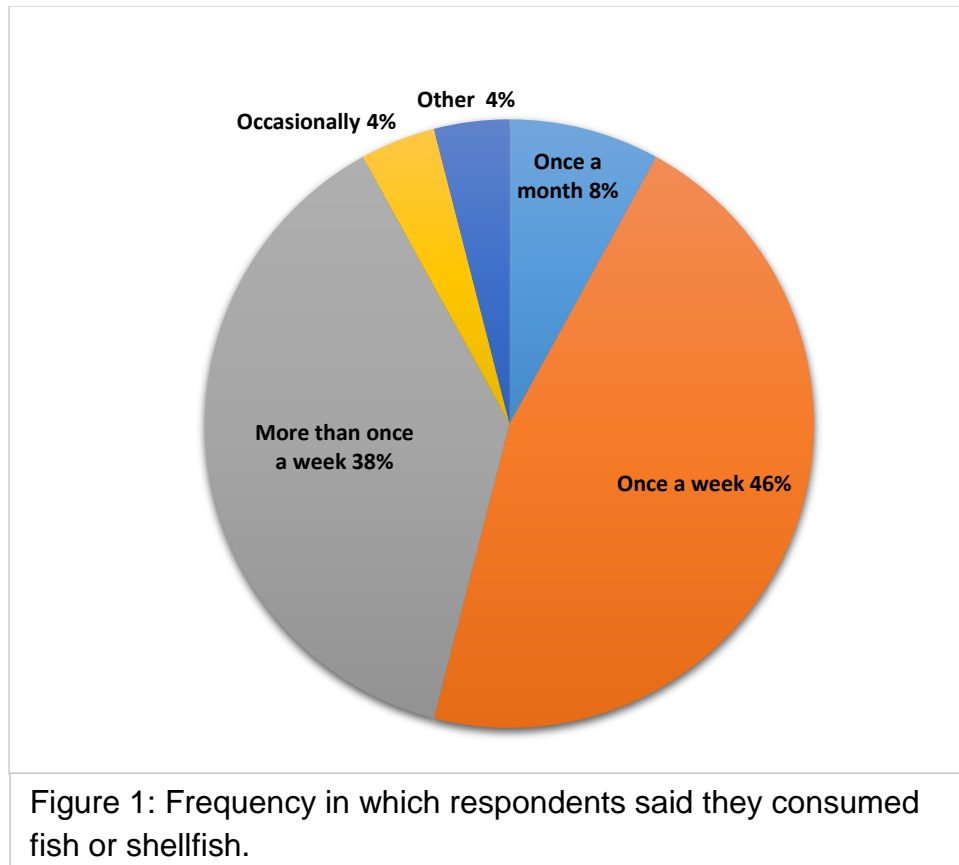
The survey is still open and you can participate by visiting our webpage: <http://dec.alaska.gov/eh/vet/FMP.html>. Thank you for taking the time to let us know about the fish and contaminants that are most important to you.



More Detail:

As of October 9, 2017 we had 50 public responses to our survey. The survey participants identified themselves as seafood consumers in one or more of the following categories: 66% of respondents were sport/recreational fishing for halibut and salmon and 26% for clams, crab and shrimp. 24% of respondents said they obtain most of their food from subsistence harvests. 12% of those who answered the survey were visitors who took fish home with them and 6% said they live outside of Alaska but eat Alaskan seafood. Just over half of those who responded lived in urban centers such as Anchorage and Juneau, 20% lived in road-accessible towns/villages, 12% in towns and villages only accessible by air or water, and 12% were from out of state.

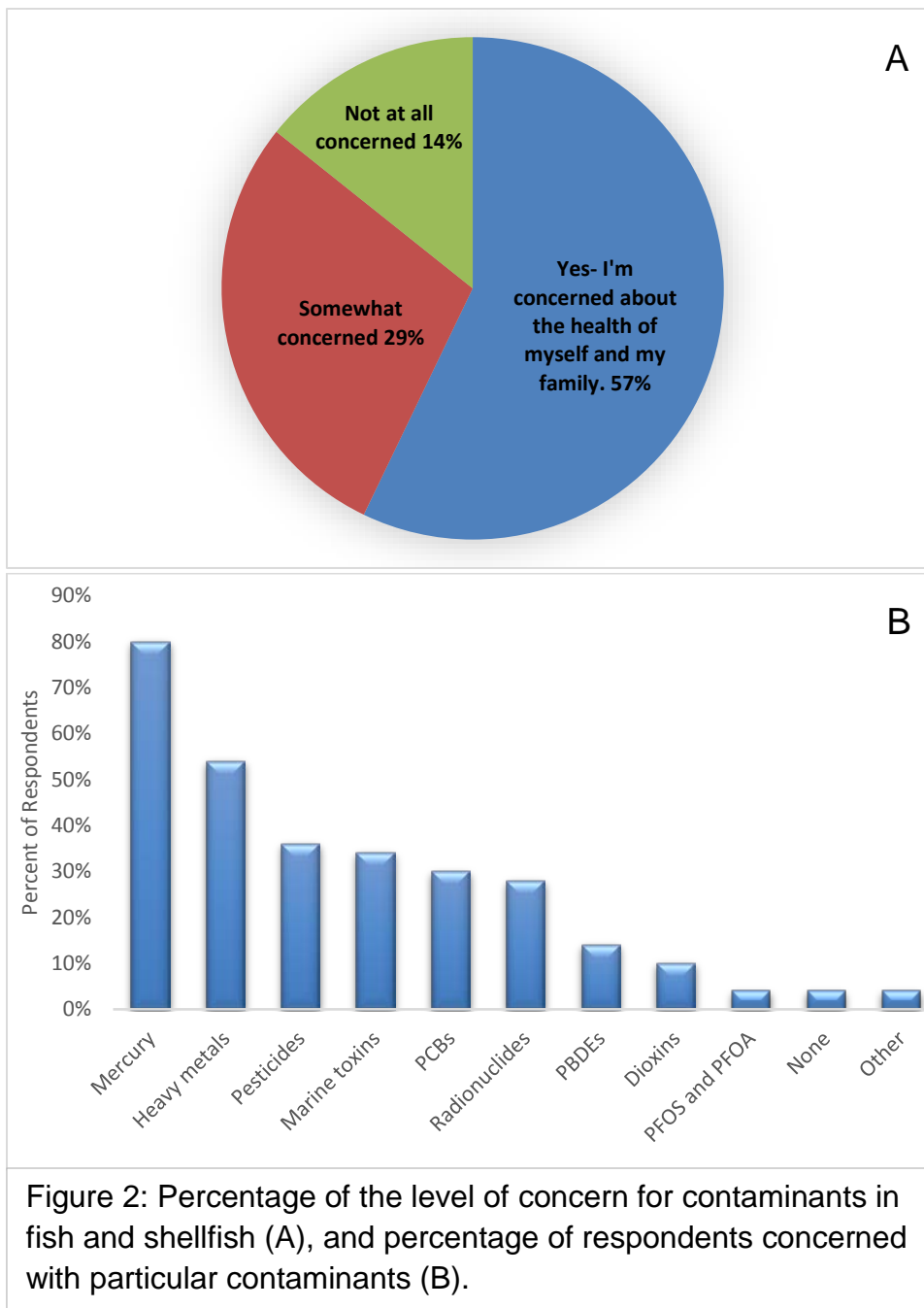
Of those responding to the survey, 38% said they ate fish more than once a week, 46% said they ate fish once a week, 8% said once a month, and 4% ate seafood only occasionally.





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Overall, 57% of respondents were concerned about contaminants in Alaskan fish and 29% were somewhat concerned, while 14% were not concerned at all. Mercury was the contaminant of most concern with 80% of people responding that it influenced their decisions when buying or eating fish. Other heavy metals such as lead, arsenic, etc. followed with 54%, then pesticides (36%), marine toxins (34%), PCBs (30%), radionuclides (28%), PBDEs (14%), dioxins (10%), and perfluorinated compounds (4%).





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Most consumed:

Respondents were asked about the fish and shellfish they caught and ate. The most popular shellfish included shrimp, King crab, Dungeness crab, and bivalves (clams, oysters, scallops). Halibut was the favored finfish with 100% of respondents responding that they ate it. Rockfish, lingcod, and all species of Pacific salmon were also caught and consumed by a majority of people. While not as many people indicated they ate freshwater fish, rainbow trout, arctic grayling, lake trout and northern pike were the most commonly consumed by Alaskans.

