



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Registering as a buyer of fish and shellfish



Information for food businesses in Wales who buy direct from fishers



Buying local

Wales has over 1,000 miles of coastline and over 60% of its people live near to the coast. Our fisheries provide valuable food and jobs for rural coastal communities. Coastal tourism is important to Wales and is currently seeing significant growth. Visitors to our coast expect to enjoy fish (including shellfish) from our seas. The Welsh Government has to manage fisheries to achieve long-term sustainability of the stock to sustain the industry now and for future generations⁽¹⁾. We can only do this with your help. We need to obtain good quality information to ensure stocks are

⁽¹⁾ The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015



fished at safe levels. We also need to make sure that minimum sizes, set to ensure fish stocks can reproduce, are respected.

Buying from local fishers is a great way to ensure that you receive fresh, seasonal fish and help contribute to the sustainability of the Welsh fishing industry. As consumers become increasingly interested in where their food comes from, it can help you demonstrate good provenance and assist the industry to add value to their catch.



Why you may need to register as a buyer of fish

You may not be aware, but if you buy fish or shellfish direct from a fisherman your business is required to be registered as a **‘buyer of first sale fish’** under The Registration of Fish Buyers and Sellers and Designation of Fish Auction Sites (Wales) Regulations 2006 (the Regulations).

‘First sale fish’ is defined as **‘fish being marketed for the first time’**.

The aim of the Regulations is to provide management information about the levels of fish that are bought and sold. It also helps to provide increased confidence for the retail and hospitality industry and consumers about the provenance of fish. Commercial fishers have invested significantly to meet their statutory obligations. This legislation respects the level of investment that they have made to legitimately land the fish and shellfish into Wales.

Where species are not currently subject to European management arrangements under the Common Fisheries Policy but may do so in the future (such as sea bass), the share received by Wales is likely to be based on the records collected under this scheme. It is important that these records are accurate.



Buying direct from fishers

Under the Regulations, it is an offence (punishable by a substantial fine⁽²⁾) to knowingly buy any fish or shellfish which has been landed from an unlicensed fishing vessel when the fish is not for your own personal consumption. If you are unsure whether the vessel you are buying from is licensed, simply ask to see from the owner some written reassurance or contact your local fisheries office before purchasing, there is also a vessel register at www.fishregister.gov.uk



⁽²⁾ upto a maximum of £50,000 per offence

Frequently asked questions

Q: How is the information I provide under these Regulations used?

A: Your information is added to other sources to track the catches made of a particular fish stock in a particular year. It then is offset against what is allowed to be taken to maintain the sustainability of the stock. Information may be cross-checked against landing information to confirm that it is robust.

Q: Who will the information that I provide be shared with?

A: Your registration details are entered upon a publically available database but your purchasing information is kept in the strictest confidence.

Q: If I own/manage a restaurant or cafe and regularly buy fish from a wholesaler, but occasionally buy a few fish from a local fisherman, do I need to register?

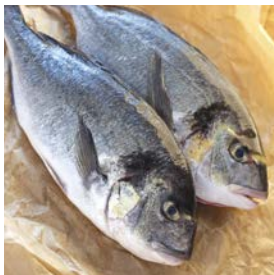
A: Yes. If you buy any 'first sale' fish for these purposes, you must be registered as a buyer.

Q: Do these rules apply to farmed fish?

A: No.

Q: Do these rules apply to wild caught salmon and sea trout?

A: No. Separate Natural Resource Wales measures exist relating to the sale of these fish. Sale of rod-caught fish is prohibited (<https://naturalresources.wales/media/3961/rod-fishing-byelaws-2015.pdf>) and other restrictions e.g. tagging apply to fish caught by licensed nets.



Q: Do these rules apply to hand-gathered shellfish, such as cockles?

A: No, but this is currently under review.

Q: If I buy fish for personal consumption, do I need to register?

A: No. Individuals who buy a small amount (less than 25kg) of fish for personal consumption are not required to register, but they should be aware that unlicensed fishers who sell fish are breaking the law.

Q: How do I register?

A: See 'Further information' below. Your local fisheries office can provide guidance on completing the registration form and on what documentation you need to supply with the form.

Q: What are the requirements after I register?

A: You are required to provide sales information for all purchases of first sale fish to your local fisheries office having received all the necessary information to complete the sales note. Contact your local fisheries office for further detail on the information required.



Further information

To find out more about registering as a buyer of fish or to request a copy of the registration form, contact your local Welsh Government fisheries office:

Milford Haven

Phone: 03000 253500

Email: milfordhavenfisheriesoffice@gov.wales

Suite 3, Cedar Court, Haven's Head Business Park, Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire SA73 3LS

Holyhead

Phone: 01407 765757

Email: holyheadmailbox@gov.wales

The Old Vicarage, Newry Street, Holyhead, Anglesey, LL65 1DB

You can also find a copy of the registration form and guidance on completing it at: **<https://gov.wales/registered-buyers-and-sellers-fish-and-shellfish>**

To see details of currently registered buyers of first sale fish, and for other information such as a register of licensed vessels, visit **www.fishregister.gov.uk**

The Seafish website provides further consumer information and guidance here **www.seafish.org/media/publications/CMO_Guide_Ver_2_17-10.pdf**