

Small New Zealand Fishing Town Makes a Big Splash in US Marketplace

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## Fresh New Zealand Snapper Offers a First for Whole Foods Market Shoppers



The small town of Leigh, New Zealand may only have a population of 750, but it's showing the world how to do humane, sustainable fishing right.

Starting August 10, the industry-leading supermarket chain Whole Foods will begin a week-long sale of the iconic New Zealand Snapper (also known as Tai Snapper)—prized for its golden scales, light blue spots and delicious taste - across the U.S.



Savored by chefs and fish enthusiasts, these fish are also unique because each carries the story of a community fully committed to the responsible harvesting of this New Zealand treasure.



Compared to the modern industrial fishing practices of today, these New Zealand Snapper represent a culmination of both responsible and personalized advancements.

Everyone in Leigh has a relative who will either be fishing, packing or trucking the snapper to the airport for the Air New Zealand flight to the USA.

From the forty independent boats that fish for the company, to the thirty employees who work at the factory filleting, sorting, and packing the fish, to the staff at Lee Fish USA (the Los Angeles based arm of the fishery); everyone takes great pride in sustaining the quality of the fish to ensure it stands up to the "Lee Fish" brand. [\(read more\)](#)



These small artisan fishing boats brave the harsh New Zealand winter waters for 12-24 hours at a time to catch New Zealand Snapper using the longline fishing method, where a single line with baited hooks is used to selectively pick the fish. In addition to the more sustainable nature of this selective fishing method, it is a preferred alternative to putting out a net or a trawl due to the substantial difference in quality of the fish, boasting a cleaner, less fishy taste and a better, firmer texture.



The fish are brought out of the water alive and killed using the Japanese Iki-Jime method, which humanely kills the fish instantly preserving the freshness and taste.

The "Iki-Jime" technique ([read more](#)) is practiced on a small scale around the world, and usually only performed to meet the discerning demands of high-end sushi markets in Japan. It's rare for US consumers to be able to buy fish that is truly sashimi-grade and of a quality suitable for the most discriminating chef.

Whole Foods sources seafood based on scores by the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch ([read more](#)) as well as the Safina Center projects([read more](#)) that give sustainability ratings to fish buyers. The New Zealand Snapper meets these standards as an inshore fish which is managed under the world leading New Zealand quota management system. While these Snapper are being caught in quantities to satisfy a national sale they are being done so with a view of protecting New Zealand's fish stocks for future generations to enjoy.



As of August 10, shoppers across the US who pick up one of these high-quality New Zealand Snappers can feel comforted knowing they are supporting this small sustainable fishing community from the other side of the world – while enjoying one of the best tasting fish on the planet.



**Lee Fish USA** is America's leading importer of the finest fresh seafood from around the globe with emphasis on Australia and New Zealand which is set apart by a rich harvest of shellfish and seafood from the pristine waters of the Southern Ocean-ranked among the world's best. Lee Fish USA also imports from Spain, Italy, Tahiti, Japan, Malaysia, Chile, Peru and Hawaii. Adapting a philosophy of respect which encompasses a deep regard for the sea and the environment, for sustainability and responsible behavior.

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