

FORBES' FICTION

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Good Catch Touts Tuna That's Better For the Oceans, Safe For The Office



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Tuna's a perennially popular fish that's long been the filling for sandwiches, the base for casseroles and a top selection at sushi bars. The fish's ubiquitous part in the sights of startups looking to develop more sustainably sourced fish that can be just as sought-after.

Good Catch will launch its first plant-based tuna products on grocery subscription service Thrive Market and ~~at Whole Foods Market~~ stores today, two years after vegan chefs Chad Sarno and his brother, Derek, partnered with Chris Kerr of New Crop Capital and entrepreneurs Marci Zaroff and Eric Schnell to start the brand.

While demand remains high, the supply is dwindling rapidly and the remaining fish can come with problems including high levels of mercury, PCBs and other contaminants in wild caught seafood. Farmed fish come with other issues, including the dangers associated with confinement and overuse of antibiotics, according to FAO data.

Tuna's position as one of the most popular and most over-fished species is one reason the first batch of plant-based seafood brands have focused their initial efforts on the fish.

Skipjack and Albacore stocks, the types of tuna used most often in cans and pouches, are especially robust.

"There's more and more of a general awareness around the mercury load in fish," Sarno said.

"Physicians tell pregnant women to avoid it. It's crazy that we still eat this product we can't eat in all stages of life."

Canned and pouched tuna is safe for pregnant women. It is only recommended they avoid bigeye tuna, a species found in sushi (but they shouldn't be eating any raw fish during pregnancy anyway).

The resulting product is a plant-based tuna that boasts the texture, taste and health benefits of tuna without the smell that will turn off coworkers at lunchtime in the office.

The increasingly dire situation in the world's oceans is a driving force behind Good Catch, as well as the company's core beliefs that plant-based foods are the healthier and more ethical choice for consumers across the board, from vegans to omnivores. The company plans to make good use of in-store samplings to give people their first taste of the plant-based fish, Sarno said.

Is there any evidence of this? Seafood is already a healthy option.

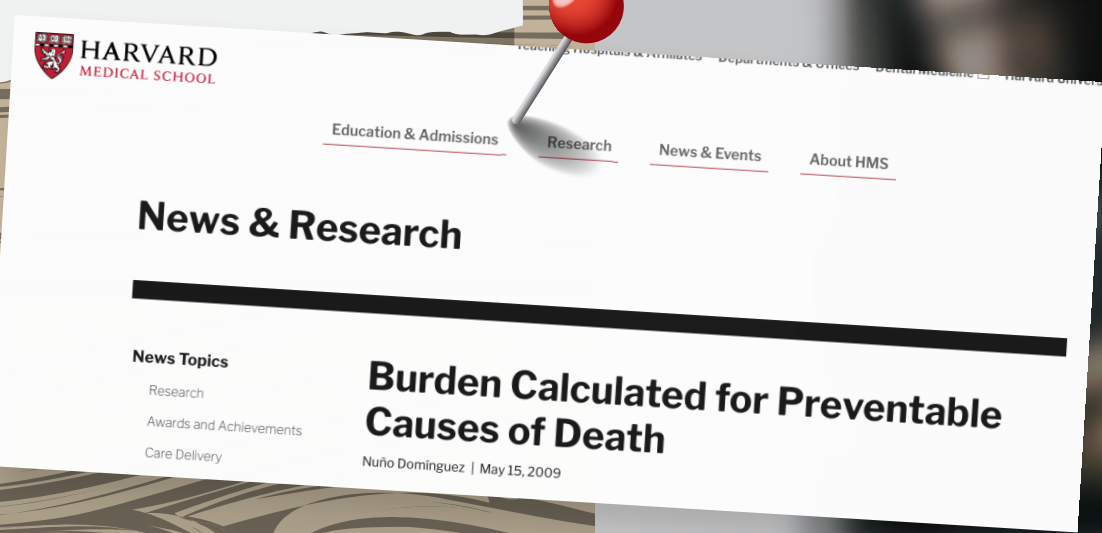
Tuna companies work with organizations like the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF) to secure the future of our oceans.



The truth is, there has never been a case of mercury poisoning from normal consumption of commercial seafood recorded in any American medical journal. That's right, zero cases.

This oft repeated hyperbole illustrates a clear lack of research. Suggesting PCB's are a "problem" in fish ignores the fact that fish make up only 9% of the PCB's found in the average American diet. While vegetables make up 20%. So, here you have an author profiling a replacement product that delivers more than twice the amount of the contaminant consumers are supposedly trying to avoid.

The FDA warns that most Americans are eating dangerously low amounts of seafood, a deficiency that contributes to nearly 84,000 preventable deaths each year.



Plant-based products are not seafood.

The world's leading seafood sustainability experts report that most tuna species in most fisheries around the world are healthy and not in danger of being overfished.



FALSE: Pregnant women can and should eat a variety of seafood, including tuna.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) recommend eating 2-3 servings of a variety of seafood every week.

And the FDA's own research shows that pregnant women can eat a tuna sandwich for breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day risk-free.



To state without qualification that plant-based imitation seafood has the same "health benefits of tuna" is not only disingenuous but dangerous.

A bit extreme? Sustainable fishing provides healthy and nutritious food options.



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