The Story of Fish

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The dangers of fish consumption are similar to anything grown on our soil. Oceans, lakes and rivers are polluted, especially with mercury and plastics that dissolve and are ingested by fish.

Industrial fish farming raises many of the same environmental concerns about chemicals and pollutants associated with large CAFOs (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations) used to raise cattle, chickens and pigs.

Then there is the concern that fish farms are not environmentally friendly or sustainable and have a negative impact on wild caught fish. Feeding farm fish soy is of particular concern because most of it is genetically modified with unknown consequences and contains the herbicide Roundup, which is extremely toxic to aquatic life and alters the nutritional content of fish. All farm-raised fish are fed antibiotics. Pesticides are used to keep nets free of algae. Fish waste generates bacteria that consume oxygen vital to shellfish and other bottom dwelling sea-creatures. This contaminates and causes viruses and spreads to wild fish. Salmon are found with the leukemia virus. Genetically modified salmon are grown five times faster – 18 months compared with three years. They are not labeled as genetically modified salmon. Over-fishing is causing extinction. Studies have also consistently found levels of PCBs, dioxins, toxaphene and dieldrin, as well as mercury, to be higher in farm-raised fish than wild fish.

Mercury poisons the kidneys and the nervous system. This is now a serious and widespread health problem. Eating fish is the number one cause. Coal burning power plants and factories pollute the air with mercury that settles in the lakes, rivers and oceans. Industrial waste flows into the sea. Mercury concentration rises in the larger fish such as king mackerel, marlin, shark, tuna, orange roughy, swordfish, ahi tuna, big eye tuna and albacore tuna. Sushi is to be avoided also. It is estimated that half the tuna sold is not safe. "White Tuna" is not really tuna but a fish called "escolar."

Resources:
Healthy Fish Guide: http://www.doh.wa.gov/fish