



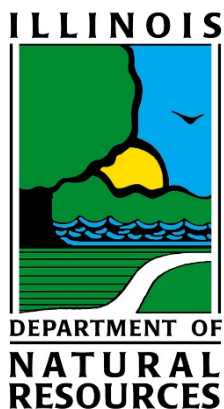
Fact sheet on Asian carp in Illinois

A healthy, delicious, locally-sourced dining option for restaurant patrons

The State of Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) is ramping up the availability of Asian carp for the culinary industry and other users. While some may have a negative impression of the fish due to its name, the truth is that Asian carp is an **appetizing, healthy choice** for dining patrons.

From a sustainability standpoint, Asian carp was recently recommended for consumption by the highly respected www.SeafoodWatch.org program. Developed by the Monterey Bay Aquarium, **Seafood Watch** assists both consumers and businesses in making healthy choices for the environment. **More Asian carp facts:**

- Nutritionally, Asian carp have **high levels of healthy** Omega-3 fatty acids and iron, and are a **high-quality** protein source surpassed only by wild-caught salmon.
- Several public tasting events have indicated that American consumers are typically impressed by Asian carp's **pleasant, mild flavor**.
- Asian carp are **eaten all over the world** and even farm-raised in Asia.
- An abundant supply of **fresh** Asian carp is readily available in **clean** Illinois waters.
- Asian carp is **locally-sourced**, reducing transportation and associated environmental costs.
- As a top-water filter feeder (not a bottom feeder), Asian carp have **low contaminant levels**.
- The harvesting of Asian carp is an **ecologically sound strategy** for reducing their over-abundance in Illinois waterways, which resonates with many dining patrons and restaurateurs.



As a locally caught, fresh, and sustainable fish option, Asian carp has the potential to **increase the financial bottom line** of businesses. The fish meat is tender and mild, healthful with beneficial fatty acids, and compares favorably with other popular fish in terms of purity and low levels of contaminants.

Additionally, the consumption of Asian carp will return a healthy balance to local waterways, benefitting both Illinois' aquatic life and its recreational users.

For more information on Asian carp, please contact Ted Penesis, INDR Director of Outreach, at **847-608-3108** or Ted.Penesis@illinois.gov.