



## What Chefs Need to Know about West Coast Groundfish

### The Facts:

- **Groundfish** are fish that live at or near the bottom of the ocean.
- **West Coast groundfish** include 90+ species of rockfish, flatfish, roundfish, sharks, and other species.
  - *Nearly 50 species of rockfish, including: Darkblotched, Rougheye, Splitnose, Thornyheads, Widow, Yellowtail.*
  - *12 species of flatfish, including: Dover, English, and Petrale sole; Sanddabs; Arrowtooth flounder.*
  - *Other notable species: lingcod, sablefish, skates, dogfish, hake.*
- **The West Coast groundfish fishery** refers to the federal waters where groundfish are caught: 3-200 miles offshore of California, Oregon, and Washington.



### The West Coast Groundfish Fishery's Story:

- The fishery was declared a federal disaster in 2000; fish were being caught faster than they could replenish their populations and overfishing devastated ocean floor habitats.
- In just over a decade, [the fishery has seen a remarkable recovery](#) through innovative collaboration between fishermen, regulators, and conservationists.
- The fishery is currently managed by a combination of quotas, area restrictions, seasonal closures, and gear restrictions; federal observers also accompany every fishing trip.

### Groundfish Recovery and Sustainability:

- In 2014, the West Coast groundfish fishery achieved MSC certification, and [13 groundfish species were certified sustainable](#):
  - *6 rockfish species: Longspine and Shortspine Thornyheads, Chilipepper, Splitnose, Widow, Yellowtail.*
  - *Other species: Longnose Skates, Arrowtooth flounder, Dover sole, English sole, Petrale sole, Lingcod, and Sablefish.*
- Seafood Watch also [rated 39 species](#) green (Best Choice) or yellow (Good Alternative).
  - *All trawl- and longline-caught rockfish were upgraded from Avoid to Good Alternative, or Best Choice.*
  - *Major flatfish species—including Dover sole, English sole, Pacific sanddab, and rex sole—were upgraded from Good Alternative to Best Choice.*
  - *U.S. Pacific spiny dogfish were upgraded from Avoid to Best Choice.*

### How Chefs Can Aid the Fishery's Full Recovery:

- While the fishery is recovering from an environmental standpoint, groundfish remain undervalued in the marketplace. Most species sell for low prices, and many are also unknown to consumers.
- As tastemakers, chefs and culinary professionals can encourage the fishery's full environmental and economic recovery by putting groundfish back on menus across the country. This action creates awareness of, and builds demand for, undervalued seafood.

### More Information, Including Suppliers:

<http://www.chefscollaborative.org/programs/seafood-solutions/groundfish-recovery/>

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