

The BC Salmon Farmers Association has been contacted by a member of the media regarding the purchase by a customer who was concerned about the quality of a piece of farm-raised salmon.

Salmon farmers in BC grow and harvest very high-quality salmon and have stringent procedures and controls in place to ensure their salmon is healthy and great tasting. On the very rare occasion that a customer may have concerns about a piece they've purchased, we encourage them to return it to their retailer for a full refund or exchange.

The journalist has posed questions regarding kudoja thyrstites: a marine organism that is also carried by many other natural fish species. While it causes the salmon flesh to soften quickly after harvest which is unsightly, it does not harm the fish in any way during their lifecycle. It's also not harmful to humans in any way.

Members of the BCSFA reduced the incidence of kudoja through research and management practices, and continue to support further research and development.

- Kudoja has no human health effect.
- Kudoja thyrstites is a marine organism that is carried by many fish species and in all oceans. It causes no health effects to the fish during their lifecycle, however, it can cause the flesh of the fish to soften after it has been processed.
- Kudoja has been found in at least 20 fish species: sea trout, herring, hake, wild and farmed salmon— both Atlantic and Pacific species - North Pacific arrow tooth flounder, mahi mahi. Other fish species found to be susceptible are Dover sole and Pacific halibut, among others.¹
- The quality impact of kudoja is handled differently by various fisheries. While many wild fisheries will smoke or can affected fish (thereby killing the organism), BC's salmon farmers provide their product fresh – which means salmon farmers use other management tools to reduce its occurrence.
- While it is rare for a consumer to purchase a low quality salmon from BC, it is also unacceptable. Our farmers have quality assurance programs and are proud of the salmon they sell. Just as you would return an apple with a bruise on it, we encourage consumers who are not satisfied with a product to return it to their retailer.
- There is currently ongoing research by Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Marine Harvest Canada on kudoja and possible options for inhibiting it or reducing its occurrence.

¹ Kent M L, Moran J D W, 1999. Kudoja thyrstites (Myxozoa: Myxosporea) Infections in Pen-Reared Atlantic Salmon in the Northeast Pacific Ocean with a Survey of Potential Nonsalmonid Reservoir Hosts. Journal of Aquatic Animal Health, Volume 11,