

Here to give the UK seafood sector
the support it needs to thrive.



Cod 2024

This Market Insight factsheet intends to provide the United Kingdom (UK) seafood industry a summary of cod in the retail, foodservice and trade sectors.

16/07/2024 Suzi Pegg-Darlison (15-minute read)

Contents

- Factsheet overview 2**
- Top takeaways 3
 - UK trade and supply*..... 3
 - UK retail* 3
 - GB foodservice*..... 3

- UK trade and supply 3**
- Landings 4
- Imports 4
- Exports 6

- UK retail sector 6**
- Cod sales in retail 7
 - Sales by sector*..... 7
 - Sales by segment*..... 7
 - The cod shopper in Great Britain (GB)* 8

- GB Foodservice 9**
- Total performance and channel performance 9
- Consumer demographics and motivations 10

- Sources 10**

Factsheet overview

This Market Insight factsheet intends to provide the United Kingdom (UK) seafood industry a summary of cod in the retail, foodservice and trade sectors.

Consumer preferences are constantly changing with several factors playing a role in purchasing decisions. Understanding this and having insights into the seafood market and its role in the retail, foodservice and trade sectors, can help to run a successful seafood business.

Top takeaways

Cod remains a popular species in the UK purchased by consumers in and out of home. It's the second most imported species by volume, the third most popular seafood species by volume sales in retail and is 18% of all seafood servings in foodservice.

UK trade and supply

Most of the cod available to the UK is imported from other countries. It's the top imported species by volume with most imports consigned from China and Iceland. To year end March 2024 cod imports totalled 190,267 tonnes. A further 15,040 tonnes are landed to the UK by fishing vessels and over half of this volume is exported at 7,955 tonnes with most destined for the EU.

UK retail

12% of the total seafood volume sales in retail are to cod. Worth £477 million it is the third most purchased species in terms of volume, 44,517 tonnes. In retail cod is seeing price driven year-on-year value growth up 2% with volume sales declining 9%.

GB foodservice

18% of all the seafood servings out of home are cod. Overall, it was a poor year to March 2024 with servings down 10% on the previous year end. Cod is usually purchased in a fried format from the Fish and Chip Shop channel.

UK trade and supply

The following sections provide details of cod landings, imports, and exports, comparing provisional data from March 2024 to March 2023.

Allocating trade statistics to a single species is not always possible, statistics presented in this report should be interpreted with caution. The extent of cod trade available can be found below in the trade data notes and limitations section. The volumes stated are live weight in tonnes unless otherwise stated for specific products.

Landings

To year end March 2024 total value of UK landings was £783 million, an increase of 0.2%, this equates to 451,788 tonnes of seafood landed, up 5% compared to year end March 2023.

Cod was the ninth top species landed into the UK by volume. It represented 3% of all landings by volume, a decrease of 0.4 percentage points compared to year end March 2023. In total, 15,040 tonnes of cod were landed into the UK. This was a 7% decrease on the previous year end.

By value cod landings represented 6% of all landings, a decline of 1 percentage points versus 2023. The value of cod landings was £50 million, a decrease of 15%. The average price of landed cod is down 9% equivalent to £0.32 per kilogram.

Imports

The UK is one of the top global importers of cod by value, with most of the cod available in the UK for domestic consumption imported from other countries. Cod was the topmost imported species of seafood to the UK by live weight volume.

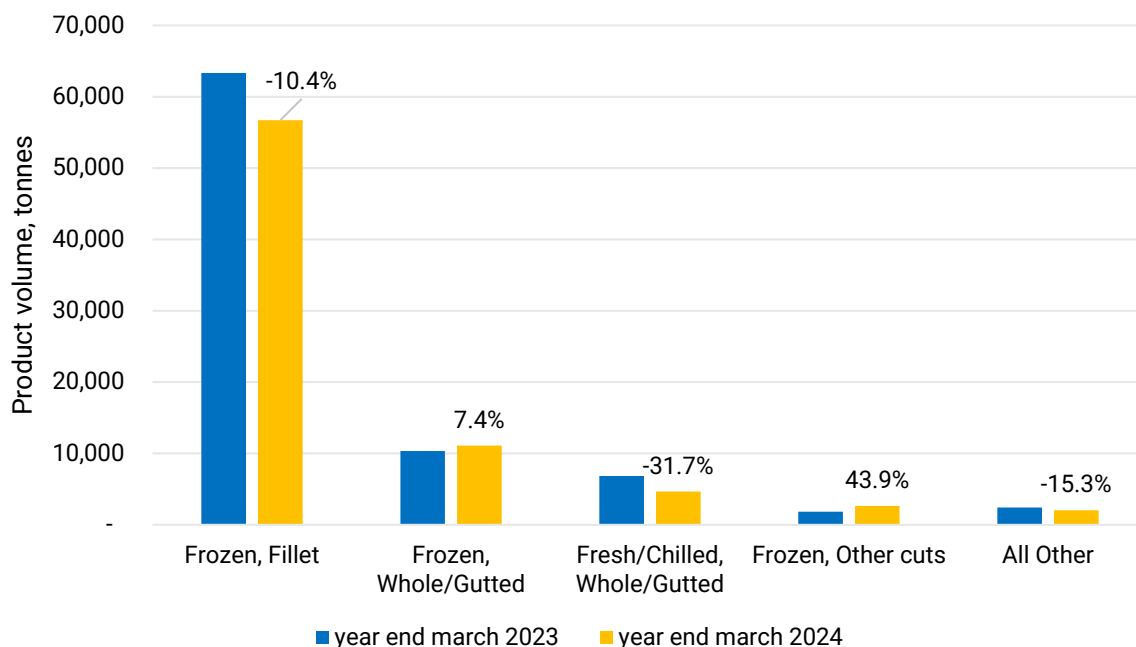
To March 2024, 15% of the overall value of total seafood imports to the UK were from cod, a decrease of 1.2 percentage points from 2023. Cod made up 17% of the overall volume of total seafood imported to the UK, a decrease of 0.6 percentage points.

The total value of cod imported to the UK to March 2024 was £498 million, a £86 million decline (-15%) compared to the previous year end 2023.

The average price of imported cod decreased by £0.03 per kilogram (-6%). In comparison the average price of total seafood imports fell by £0.13 per kilogram (-2%) over the same period. Import volumes decreased by 21,607 tonnes (-10%) to total 190,267 tonnes.

The UK imports mostly frozen fillets of cod with an increasing proportion of frozen whole/gutted products. The volume of frozen fillets imported fell over this period. The chart below shows the weight of cod products imported by format.

Chart 1. UK imports volumes (net product tonnes) of cod by format to year end March 2023 versus March 2024.



Over a half of all cod imports were from China and Iceland, and 96% were from the top five countries of consignment as listed below in table 1. This shows more details of the top five exporting countries by import volume of cod.

Table 1. Imports to the UK of cod by exporting country (top five) year end March 2023 versus March 2024.

Rank	Exporting Country	Volume (live weight tonnes)		Growth (year on year)		Share of Total Cod Import
		March 2023	March 2024	Percentage	Actual (tonnes)	
1	China	57,489	56,430	-2%	-1,059	30%
2	Iceland	48,479	47,884	-1%	-595	25%
3	EU-27*	35,540	37,208	5%	1,668	20%
4	Norway	31,390	30,103	-4%	-1,286	16%
5	Faroe Islands	12,082	11,858	-2%	-223	6%
Total Cod Imports		211,874.1	190,267.1	-10%	-21,607	

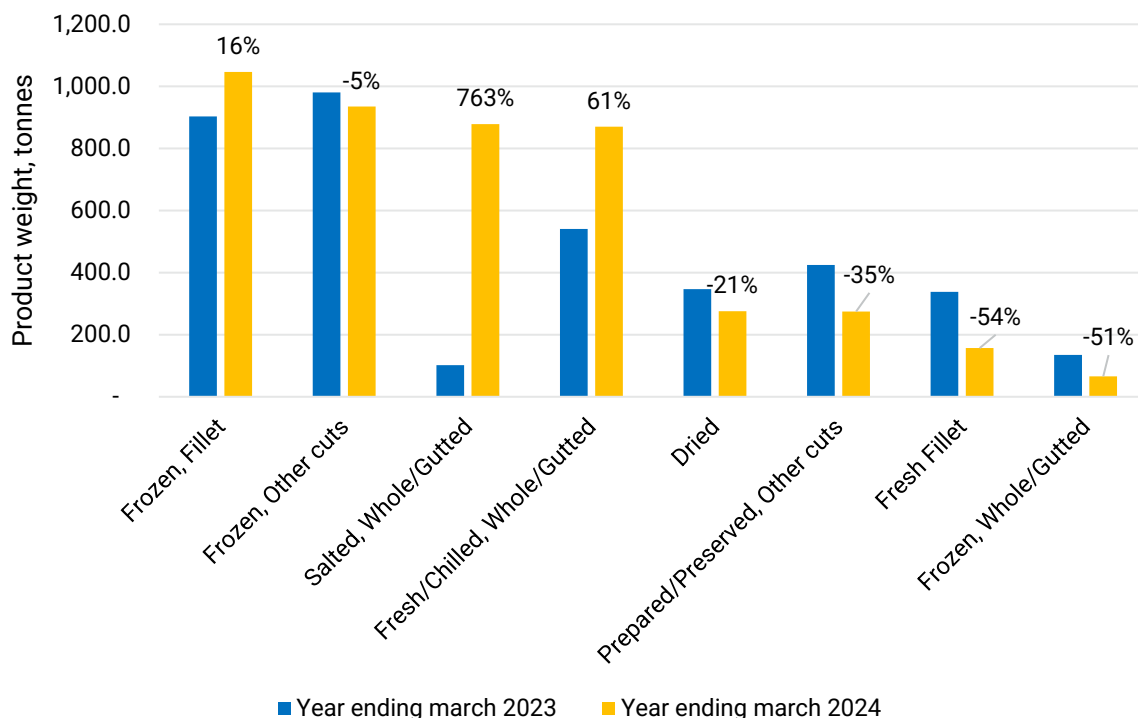
*EU-27 includes Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden.

Exports

The top five exported species by volume included salmon, mackerel, herring, scallops, and whelk. At 15th place, cod exports represent 2% of the total volume of UK seafood exports, equivalent to 7,955 tonnes. Volumes increased 19% from 6,661 tonnes the year before. Cod exports were worth £21 million in the year to March 2024, up 14% from £18 million the year before.

Most cod exports were to the EU (82%) led by exports to Denmark (24%), France (18%), Ireland (14%) and Portugal (12%). The format of cod products exported is diverse, with an increase in the volume of frozen fillets, salted, fresh/chilled products exported in the year to March 2024, shown in chart 2.

Chart 2. UK exports volumes (net product tonnes) of cod by format to year end March 2023 verses March 2024.



UK retail sector

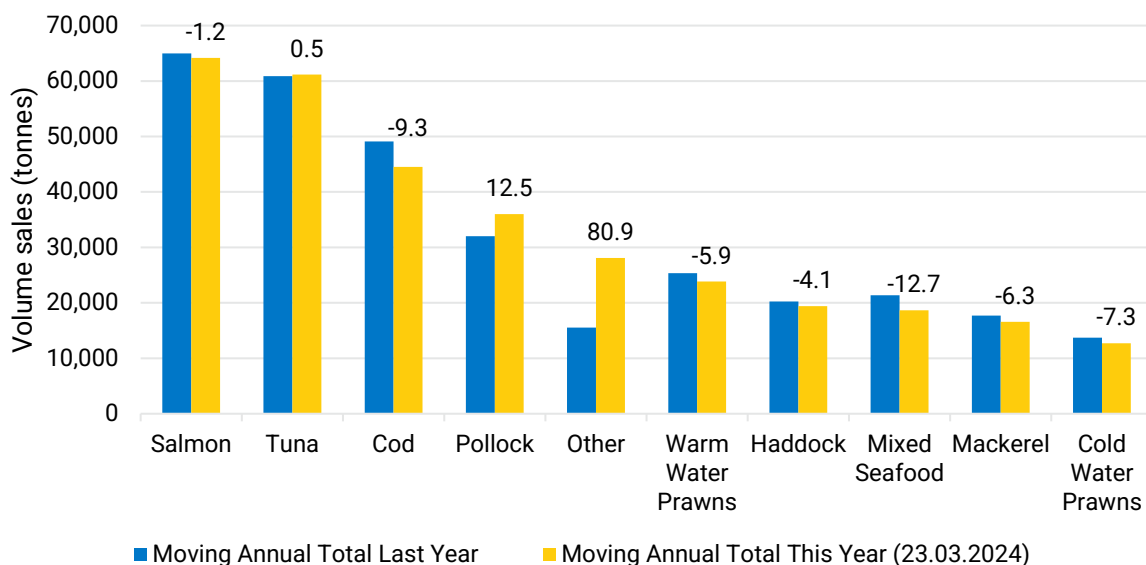
Cod is a species of white fish popular consumers when purchasing seafood in the UK retail sector. This section provides details of consumer purchases of cod in the retail market, including shopper profiles.

Cod sales in retail

Cod was the third bestselling fish of all seafood species by volume, with 12% of all seafood volume sales in retail being cod, as illustrated in chart 3.

UK shoppers purchased just over 44,517 tonnes of cod equating to a retail value of £477 million over the 52 weeks ending 23rd March 2024. Value sales of cod are up 2% year-on-year however this is price driven as volume sales declined 9% and price per kilogram increased by 12%.

Chart 3. Volume sales (tonnes) of the top ten species in retail with volume percentage growth (%) to 52 week ending 23rd March 2024.



Sales by sector

Over half of all cod volume sales are purchased in a frozen format with two-fifths being chilled. There were no ambient sales of cod in retail in the 52 weeks to 23rd March 2024.

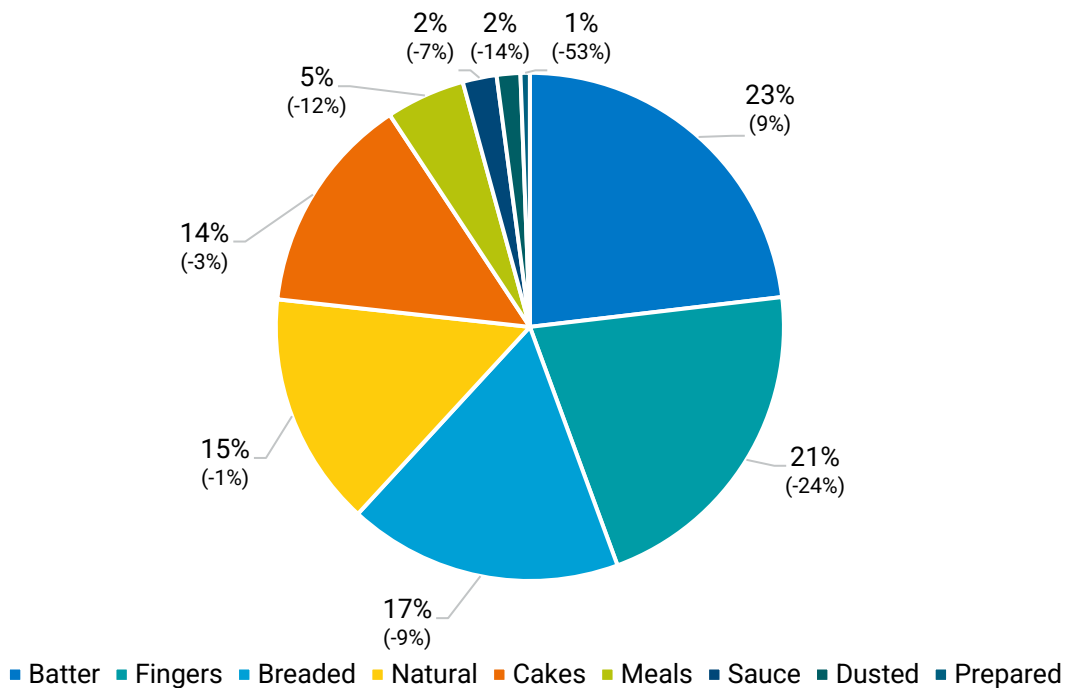
The overall volume decline of cod was largely driven by frozen sales down 16% with chilled cod up 2% compared to the same period in 2023. In terms of value, frozen experienced declines of 4% despite increases in price per kilogram up 15% with chilled cod value sales up 8% and price per kilogram up 6%.

Sales by segment

Cod is sold in nine product formats in retail known as segments; batter, fingers, breaded, natural, cakes, meals, sauce, dusted and prepared. There were no sushi sales of cod in the 52 weeks to 23rd March 2024.

Of the nine segments batter has the largest share of cod with fingers a close second. Together they make up almost half of all cod volume sales. Batter is the only segment experiencing volume growth at 9% with all other segments in decline. Chart 4 below illustrates the volume share of cod by each segment with year-on-year percentage change.

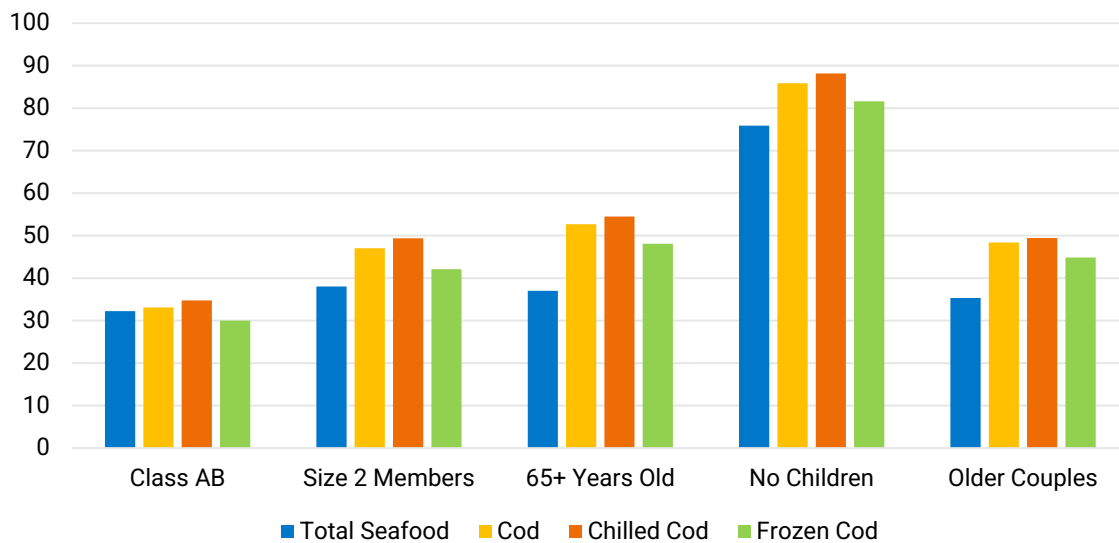
Chart 4. Volume sales share of cod in retail by segment with volume percentage growth (%) to 52 week ending 23rd March 2024.



The cod shopper in Great Britain (GB)

When comparing with the overall seafood shopper profile, the cod shopper is quite distinct. They are more affluent, from smaller households, are older and tend not to have children. Chart 5 below shows the cod shopper demographics by sector with clear differences between the chilled and frozen cod shopper by purchase volume.

Chart 5. Purchase volume share of trade for each demographic across cod and by chilled and frozen to 52 week ending 23rd March 2024.



Overall frequency of purchases declined with less householders buying cod and buying less volume.

GB Foodservice

Cod is a popular species with GB consumers when eating out of home. This section provides details of consumer purchases of cod out of home including consumer demographics.

When eating out of home, diners purchase cod in a range of formats across six different channels being: Fish and Chip Shops, Pubs, Full-Service Restaurants, Workplace and Education, Quick Service Restaurants and Travel and Leisure. Most commonly cod is sold in a fried format from the Fish and Chip Shop channel.

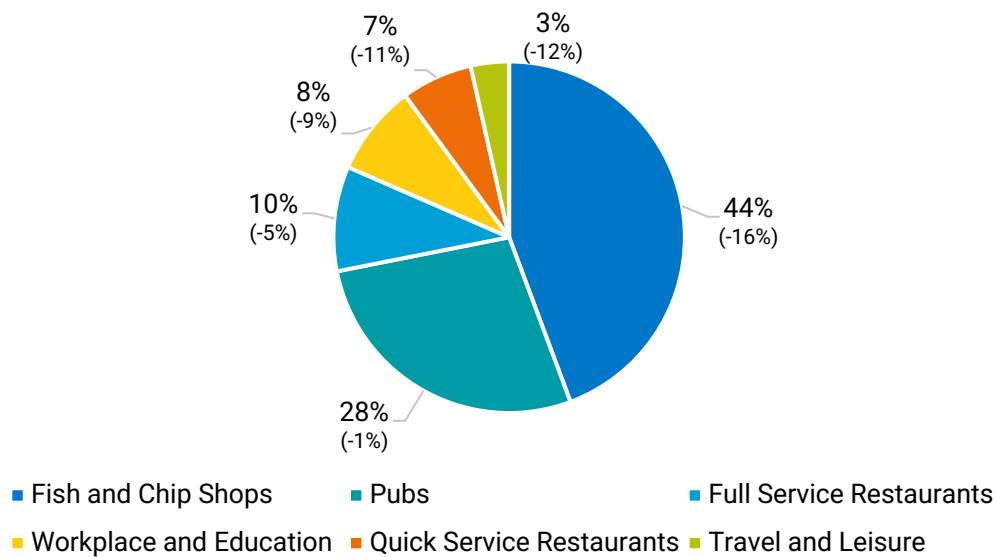
Total performance and channel performance

26,070 tonnes* of cod was sold accounting for 18% of the total seafood sold out of home 142,182 tonnes*. Overall, it was a poor year to March 2024 for cod with servings down 10% on the previous year.

**Tonnes is an estimation calculated by the total number of servings sold multiplied by 140g, the recommended serving size of seafood.*

Over two-fifths of all cod servings is sold through the Fish and Chip Shop channel with 61% of all seafood servings in Fish and Chip Shops being cod. All channels experienced a decline in cod servings, as illustrated in chart 6.

Chart 6. Servings share of cod by GB foodservice channel with servings growth (%) to 12 months year end March 2024.



Consumer demographics and motivations

Two-thirds of all cod servings out of home are to consumers over fifty years of age. This is particularly the case in pubs where over 80% of all servings are to those fifty and over.

Two-thirds of all cod servings are to a more affluent consumer, especially in Full-Service Restaurants. However, compared to the total food and drink market cod over indexes with a less affluent consumer.

Cod over indexes the total market among female consumers but appeals to both genders equally. However, in pubs 61% of all cod servings are to women.

It is most likely consumed on adult only occasions, especially at Pubs with servings usually occurring during dinner, especially at Quick Service Restaurants. It is most popular on Saturdays as consumers turn to cod during a social occasion, especially at Pubs.

There is an opportunity for cod to appeal to families and parties with children, with Monday's, Tuesday's, Thursday's, and Sunday's providing a good growth opportunity. There is also an opportunity to be seen as a more convenience and functional food type.

Sources

Data sources: (%) values represent changes from the previous year unless otherwise stated. Resources used in the production of this factsheet can be viewed below.

NielsenIQ (NIQ) retail data to 52 week ending 23rd March 2024:

- ScanTrack – UK EPOS from key retailers (including composite data from discounters Aldi, Lidl and Northern Ireland) excludes seafood sandwiches.
- HomeScan – GB (including discounters) consumer panel of 15,000 households excludes seafood sandwiches.

Circana foodservice data:

- Panel based data to year ending March 2024.

HMRC trade data**:

- Import, exports, and landing HMRC data provided by BTS data to year ending March 2024.

Additional data and insights used to produce this factsheet:

- Seafish, 2023, Seafood Segments in the Retail Market
- Seafish, 2023, Seafood Trends in Commercial Foodservice (2023 Update)
- Seafish, 2023, Latest Quarterly UK Seafood Trade Data

Are you interested in the data behind the insights? Individuals working for seafood businesses can register for the Market Insight Portal on [Seafish.org](https://seafish.org) and access the [Retail](#), [Foodservice](#), and [Trade](#) data and reports directly. [Click here to register today.](#)

****Trade data notes and limitations**

HMRC trade in goods statistics cover seafood products imported to and exported from UK ports and presented as 8-digit combined nomenclature commodity (CN8) codes. We process these statistics using the EUMOFA (EU Market Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture) methodology. This allows for analysis of the value and volume of main commercial species, species groups, preservation and presentation states traded with the UK by partner country. Published data is provisional for 18-months and subject to change over this time. The species defined in trade statistics are defined based on CN8 commodity codes. Some traded commodities may include products containing a variety of different species or groups of species, meaning that individual species can't be identified. Deep-frozen raw fish fillets coated with batter or breadcrumbs are missing from this analysis. These products are grouped as "other marine fish" under commodity code 16041991 and can't be identified to a single species but may include cod. For queries relating to the trade statistics in this report please contact joe.cooper@seafish.co.uk

**For more information please contact:
Suzi Pegg-Darlison
Market Insight Analyst**

T: (01472) 252358

E: suzi.pegg-darlison@seafish.co.uk

Seafish
Origin Way
Europarc
Grimsby
DN37 9TZ

www.seafish.org

Here to give the UK seafood sector
the support it needs to thrive.

The Seafish logo features the word "seafish" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font. Above the letter "i" is a stylized graphic of a fish's tail, composed of several white diamond shapes arranged in a fan-like pattern.

seafish