

# GET INFORMED NOW

It is widely known that global demand for shrimp is ever increasing, a fact which combined with the rapidly decreasing availability of wild populations, places extreme pressure on the global shrimp farming industry to increase supply of farmed shrimp.

Since the vast majority of farmed shrimp originates in countries of the “developing world”, where farming methods used are both outdated and substandard, while at the same time, oversight by the authorities is virtually non-existent, this pressure has catastrophic effects:

## **SYSTEMATIC DESTRUCTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

- Mangrove deforestation
- Destruction of extensive farmland areas
- Contamination of the aquifer and seas
- Waste of natural resources

## **USE OF CRIMINALLY INAPPROPRIATE AQUACULTURE METHODS**

- Use of unsuitable waters for aquaculture, even raw sewage or other waste waters
- Use of unsuitable feeds, like untreated byproducts of slaughterhouses and seafood processing plants
- Systematic and unregulated use of banned chemicals (Malachite Green, Gentian Violet) and antibiotics (Chloramphenicol, Nitrofurans, Quinolones)

## **EXPLOITATION OF HUMAN LABOR**

- Inhumane working conditions
- Employment of illegal immigrants
- Employment of minors & small children

# LOCAL GREEK PRODUCTION

Represents barely 30% of all shrimp available in the Greek market, due to the fact there is virtually no local shrimp aquaculture production in Greece and thus, all locally produced quantities are wild-caught.

Availability of this kind of shrimp is steadily decreasing because wild populations available for capture are already threatened with extinction due to uncontrollable overfishing and also because they are subject to progressively stricter capture quotas. Furthermore, their prices are especially high and fluctuate considerably both according to season, as well as location.

## **There are two sources of locally captured shrimp:**

**INSHORE FISHERIES:** These fishing vessels usually do manage to deliver their catch to local points of sale within 1 - 2 days of capture. However, these already minimal quantities of shrimp are radically decreasing further, are available for a very brief & very specific time period every year and then only locally, near the base of operations of each fishing vessel.

**MIDDLE RANGE FISHERIES:** This kind of fishing operations produce about 90% of locally captured quantities. In this case, depending on the area of operations of each specific vessel, the time wasted between capture and delivery to wholesale distribution points, ranges from 3 - 4 days up to 2 - 3 weeks.

Due to the long delay between capture and consumption, WITHOUT ANY EXCEPTION, all such shrimp LEGALLY contain chemical preservatives.

However, in Greece, contradictory to the situation in the USA or other large EU countries, the relevant authorities are unable to effectively oversee & provide guidance on the use of such preservatives. They also fail to enforce relevant EU legislation, which specifically dictates the rules of reference of such additives on special signs at the points of sale.

# IMPORTS

They represent more than 70% of all shrimp available in the Greek market and originate primarily from Southeast Asia and Latin America. The vast majority of such shrimp is made available frozen and/or pre-cooked, in which case, as is widely known, they all contain a variety of chemical preservatives, antioxidants, taste enhancers and other additives, which are listed in detail on each product's label.

However, what is not widely known at all is that, as a result of random checks performed on such products, there have been numerous instances of detection of banned chemicals, pharmaceuticals, heavy metals and other toxic substances, as well as preservatives, antioxidants and other additives in quantities far exceeding the allowed levels and with no indication whatsoever on the respective labels.

As far as those made available "fresh", several companies in certain EU member states taking advantage of favorable European Legislation provisions and special trade agreements with countries in Latin America, import huge quantities of lightly-frozen shrimp from farms they maintain in these countries.

Then, after being thawed, they are distributed in other EU countries - e.g., Greece - as products of this country and as "fresh"\*.

This kind of shrimp, although they LEGALLY contain a variety of chemical preservatives (sulfates, phosphates, antioxidants), their use ILLEGALLY is never mentioned anywhere.

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\* The clear distinction in Greek between shrimp "Never-frozen" ("fréskes") and shrimp "thawed" or "previously-frozen" ("nopés"), does NOT exist in English and other languages, a fact many importers exploit in order to confuse potential consumers. In English, in order to achieve differentiation when using the generic term "Fresh", the terms mandated to be used are descriptive:

**Thawed** (or **Previously-Frozen**) v. **Never-Frozen**