

## **Global Experts Affirm Food is Safe, COVID-19 is not a Foodborne Illness** ***No scientific evidence of virus transmission through food***

**10 September 2020** – While [recent headlines](#) have promoted misleading preliminary research regarding seafood and the transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19, leading global public health and food safety organizations, including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), and the [European Food Safety Authority \(EFSA\)](#) continue to affirm that there is **no evidence that the virus that causes COVID-19 is transmitted through food, food containers, or food packaging**[1] [2].

On September 3, 2020 the [International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Food \(ICMSF\)](#) which provides timely, science based guidance to government and industry on the microbiological safety of foods, released an opinion reiterating that **COVID-19 is not a foodborne illness**:

*“Despite the many billions of meals consumed and food packages handled since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, to date there has not been any evidence that food, food packaging or food handling is a source or important transmission route for SARS-CoV-2 resulting in COVID-19.”*

- [ICMSF Opinion on SARS-CoV-2 and its relationship to food safety](#)

The USDA and FDA also reaffirmed these statements in a June 24, 2020 [joint update](#):

*“There is no evidence that people can contract COVID-19 from food or from food packaging. The U.S. food safety system, overseen by our agencies, is the global leader in ensuring the safety of our food products, including product for export.”*

This lack of evidence, combined with the Alaska seafood industry’s adherence to the highest food safety and hygiene standards, provide confidence that Alaska seafood is safe to eat and can be enjoyed without concern.

Alaska’s seafood processors abide by strict health, food safety and sanitation standards and are vigilantly monitoring and strengthening manufacturing practices during the production of Alaska seafood to comply with FAO/WHO hygiene and food handling recommendations to prevent the spread of the disease.

The Alaska seafood industry’s number one priority is the health and safety of all. Seafood industry members continue to work diligently with public health officials, medical experts, community leaders, and state and local governments to implement extensive protocols to protect Alaska’s fishing communities, seafood workforce and seafood consumers, and to continue to safely supply sustainably-harvested food for the world.



Further public health and food safety recommendations can be found on the [CDC website](#), [FDA website](#) and the [State of Alaska](#) website. ASMI continues to combat misinformation by working with relevant agencies to monitor scientific advances regarding the spread of the coronavirus and share the most up-to-date resources on our *Facts about Food Safety and COVID-19* page at [alaskaseafood.org](#).

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[1] World Health Organization, <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/food-safety-and-nutrition>; *Q&A: Food Safety and Nutrition related to COVID-19*

[2] Food and Drug Administration <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/covid-19-frequently-asked-questions>; *COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions, Food Products*

