



SEA PORT

# FAQs

## Warm Water Shrimp



Intensive farming



Extensive farming

### What countries produce the most Warm Water Shrimp?

About 67% of farmed shrimp is produced in Asia with about 30% being produced in Latin America. Since January of 2010, U.S. imports of all shrimp have come from the following countries: Thailand, 30%. Ecuador, 17%. Indonesia, 14%. Vietnam, 8%. India, 7%. Malaysia, 5%. Mexico, 5%. China, 3%. Honduras, 2%. Guyana, 2%. Bangladesh, 2%. The remaining 5% are from additional South American countries, the Philippines and the Middle East. Some of these imports do include wild caught shrimp, however the vast majority is farm-raised Warm-Water Shrimp.

### What are the farming methods for Warm Water Shrimp?

Farming methods are categorized 3 different ways: Extensive, Semi-Intensive and Intensive. In short, farming methods are based upon stocking densities. Extensive farming has 8 or below animals per square meter. In these ponds, shrimp feed mostly on naturally occurring organisms and the tides provide water exchange, requiring little to no technology. Semi-Intensive farms have roughly 9-20 animals per square meter. Ponds are located above the high-tide line and utilize feed and pumping systems. Intensive farms have much higher stocking densities than the other two methods (20-80 animals per square meter) and utilize heavy feeding, waste removal and aeration (introduction of air to the water). Intensive farming is much more costly (requires more technology and labor). Super intensive farms stock 80+ animals per square meter.



Shrimp Feed

### What is shrimp feed made of?

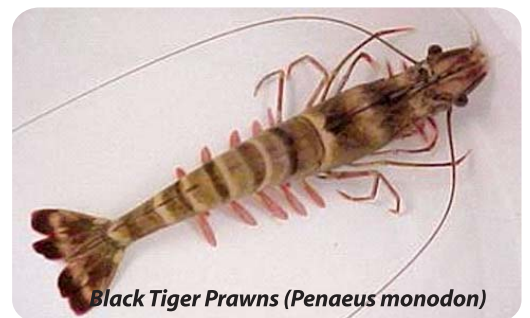
Feed is made up of 25-35% protein (fishmeal/fish oil), and 65-75% grains, either soy or corn and then trace minerals dependent upon the specific formula.



White Shrimp (*Penaeus vannamei*)

### How long does it take shrimp to grow?

Once ponds are stocked with post-larval shrimp (fry), it takes about 3-6 months (depending upon species) for growth to market-sized shrimp.



Black Tiger Prawns (*Penaeus monodon*)

### What are the major produced species?

The number one farmed species is *Penaeus vannamei* (White Shrimp), followed by *Penaeus monodon* (Black Tiger Prawns). Other species, like the freshwater *Machrobrachium rosenburgii* are also available in the market. The major producing countries for White Shrimp are Thailand, Ecuador, Indonesia, Mexico, China, Honduras and Peru. On the rise is India and Vietnam. The major producing countries for Black Tiger Prawns are Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Bangladesh and the Philippines. Freshwater Shrimp are primarily farmed in Bangladesh, India and Thailand.

### How are shrimp processed?

Shrimp are delivered to facilities on ice, processed and frozen within hours of harvest. Depending upon where the farm and facilities are located, shrimp are delivered to facilities by either boat or truck. Shrimp are received, inspected, cleaned, separated by size, then processed according to customer specifications (HLSO, PDTO, CPDPTO, etc.). In the majority of cases, shrimp are peeled by hand. After processing, shrimp are flash-frozen and packaged.



Shrimp Processing

## What are the differences between Black Tiger Prawns and White Shrimp in color, taste and texture?

**COLOR:** Black Tiger Prawns are known for “tiger stripes” on their shells and tails. Shell Color can range from brown, black, grey to blue and even some slightly pink. White Shrimp shell colors range from grey, brown to white. Shell/shrimp colors are dependent upon water and feed but are not indicative of quality. When cooked, both Black Tiger Prawns and White Shrimp turn bright red to light pink.

**TASTE:** Black Tiger Prawns are most popular for having a bold, sweet taste, while white shrimp have a more delicate flavor.

**TEXTURE:** Black Tiger Prawns have firm meat that has been described as a “snappy, meaty texture.” White Shrimp have a softer, but still firm texture.

## How should good quality shrimp smell and appear?

Raw shrimp should smell like pond water (fresh ocean air), or clean seaweed. Cooked shrimp should have a sweet or neutral smell. Raw Shrimp should appear translucent, shiny, firm, moist and resilient. Cooked Shrimp should appear firm, moist and have uniform color with a clearly defined shape of a C.

## How are Black Tiger Prawns priced vs White Shrimp?

Black Tiger Prawns are normally priced higher than White Shrimp, but this is primarily because Black Tiger Prawns grow to larger sizes than White Shrimp. Some White Shrimp farmers do allow their vannamei’s to grow to larger sizes to compete with tigers. In those cases, you may see a Black Tiger Prawn compete in pricing with the White Shrimp, however in most cases, Black Tiger Prawns receive premium pricing.

## Why do Black Tiger Prawns grow larger than White Shrimp?

Short Answer: It’s in their DNA! Black Tiger Prawns (King of Shrimp) naturally grow to large sizes. Black Tiger Prawns grow well in extensive shrimp farming, where they don’t have to compete for food or space and can reach their potential of growing big! Natural size ranges for Black Tiger Prawns are 4/6 pcs/lb thru 31/40 pcs/lb. (HLSO) White Shrimp on the other hand, do very well in intensive farming situations. Because of this, they naturally will not reach the larger sizes. Natural size ranges for White Shrimp are 21/25 thru 71/90 pcs/lb, (HLSO) although as technology and farming increases for white shrimp, the market has begun to see larger sized white shrimp.

## How are shrimp sized and what are the different forms?

Shrimp are sized by the number of pieces per pound. Therefore a 16/20 HLSO Shrimp means there are 16-20 shrimp per lb, a 26/30 CDPTO means there are 26-30 cooked shrimp per pound. Most specifications allow for an end-count, which means the average size will range towards the end of the count, ie: 16/20 HLSO Shrimp, the count will average at 19 shrimp per pound.



**HOSO**  
Head On, Shell On



**HLSO**  
Head-Less, Shell On



**HLSOEZ**  
Head-Less, Easy Peel  
(shell split down back of shrimp)



**RPDTO**  
Raw, Peeled, Deveined  
Tail On



**RPDTF**  
Raw, Peeled, Deveined  
Tail Off



**CPDTO**  
Cooked, Peeled,  
Deveined, Tail On



**CPDTF**  
Cooked, Peeled,  
Deveined, Tail Off

## Why are most shrimp treated with a moisture retention agent (phosphate or non-phosphate)?

Almost all peeled-shrimp in the market is treated with a moisture retention agent to maintain quality of the frozen product. Consumer studies have shown that when properly treated, consumers prefer shrimp with a moisture retention agent, compared to shrimp without.

## Why are sulfites used in shrimp?

Some shrimp farmers will use approved metabisulfites on shrimp to prevent melanosis (black spots) from developing on the shell. If the residue is higher than 10 ppm sulfites need to be included on the labeling.

## Are farm-raised shrimp sustainable?

Thanks to aquaculture farming of Warm Water Shrimp, shrimp has been the #1 consumed seafood item in the United States since 2001. Wild Gulf Shrimp could never supply the U.S. demand for shrimp. In order to keep shrimp (both farmed and wild) sustainable, we need aquaculture! The Global Aquaculture Alliance has developed sustainable standards that are certified under the Best Aquaculture Practices Logo. Certification is available for processors (1 Star), farms (2 Star), hatcheries (3 Star) and feed producers (4 Star). Most of Sea Port’s suppliers are certified to these standards at the facility level. While many farms do adhere to standards of sustainability, there is still work to be done. Groups like the Global Aquaculture Alliance (Sea Port is a governing member) work to develop solutions to challenges for particular farms to assure success of sustainable practices. As this continues, BAP certification at the farm level will increase assuring efficiency of shrimp feed, decreased output of waste from farms, and little to no impact on the local environment.



The Responsible  
Seafood Choice.

## What are the handling instructions and shelf-life for shrimp?

Frozen shrimp should be kept at a temperature below 0°F. When properly stored, the shelf-life of IQF (Individually Quick Frozen) shrimp is 18 months, for Block Frozen 24 months. Shrimp should be defrosted in the refrigerator and rinsed with water prior to cooking or if already cooked, rinsed prior to serving. Once defrosted, shrimp should be prepared and served within 3 days. Do not re-freeze once thawed.

## Where can my customers and I find recipe ideas and health information on shrimp?

The Shrimp Council of the National Fisheries Institute (of which Sea Port is a member) has committed annual funds for the marketing of shrimp. This marketing has been extremely successful via use of an informative website and facebook page. These sites are directed to consumers but are also great resources for shrimp buyers. Buyers can visit eatshrimp.com for recipe and health information, including access to a registered dietician for questions and answers. Like us on facebook: Eat Shrimp. Shrimp buyers and sellers are also encouraged to visit our website www.cport.net for sustainability information, health related links and other resources they might find helpful.

