



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Marketing Sector

Seafood Production

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Seafood Production** industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website (www.bgateway.com/media/dvwhjxbo/business_plan_guide.pdf), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in **May 2026**.

What do I need to know about the Seafood Production market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

- ◆ Fish and shellfish continue to enjoy almost universal usage, with **91%** of adults eating them, reflecting their long-standing and significant role in British cuisine. Fish holds a lead over shellfish in overall usage and frequency. Convenient and affordable products like fish fingers and fishcakes and the endorsement for a weekly portion of oily fish support its appeal. (Mintel, *Fish and Shellfish*, February 2025).
- ◆ The UK fish & seafood market growth during **2020-25** was primarily supported by a rise in demand from the foodservice industry. As per the latest data available, according to GlobalData, the UK's foodservice industry expanded by **18.8% in 2024**, reaching **\$122.6 billion**. Growing restaurant dining, takeaway, and quick-service formats increased seafood menu offerings and demand. As a result, suppliers and distributors benefited from higher order frequency and wider product uptake across channels. (GlobalData Explorer, *Fish & Seafood*, February 2026, *This content is reproduced under license from GlobalData PLC, Copyright 2026*).
- ◆ New entrants benefit from relatively low product differentiation, low switching costs for buyers, and a wide range and number of potential buyers and suppliers. This is likely to increase with improvements to transportation and communication. As such, economies of scale are highly important if a new entrant intends to export goods abroad. It is becoming increasingly common to outsource processing at the regional level. (GlobalData Explorer, *Fish & Seafood*, February 2026).
- ◆ Convenience is a crucial selling point in the fish/shellfish category. **More than half of users/buyers prioritise ease of cooking** as a top-three consideration when choosing fish or shellfish. It surpasses related factors like familiarity (36%) and speed (31%), emphasising the key role of this specific aspect in product positioning. The sway of convenience is amply evident in the market landscape, where formats like fish fingers and coated variants abound. Ready-to-cook products hold potential for fish processors to challenge these. (Mintel, *Fish and Shellfish*, February 2025).
- ◆ In 2024, the retail value of seafood sold in the UK increased to approximately 4.37 billion British pounds. (Statista, *Fish and Seafood Industry in the UK*, 2024)
- ◆ The national organisation for this industry is [Shellfish Association of Great Britain](#). Other industry bodies include [Scotland's Aquaculture](#), [Association of Scottish Shellfish Growers](#), [Scottish Fishermen's Federation](#), [Marine Scotland](#), [Sea Fish Industry Authority](#), [Salmon Scotland](#), [Institute of Fisheries Management](#) and [Seafood Scotland](#).

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Where can I find more information on my market?

There are also a number of online resources you may find helpful:

- ◆ [Scottish Government Marine Scotland Science, Scottish Shellfish Production Survey 2024](#). This report is based on the return of an annual survey questionnaire sent to all active authorised shellfish farming business in Scotland. Statistics on employment, production and value of shellfish from Scottish shellfish farms are also included.
- ◆ [DEFRA – Fish, Shellfish or Crustacean Farm Authorisation](#). This site contains information on the necessary authorisations and regulations for setting up a shellfish or crustacean farm which may be useful for you at the start of your business.
- ◆ [Seafish – Insight and research](#). This website provides information on a range of topics and sectors in the seafood industry including fishing, processing, trade and retail data.
- ◆ [Scottish salmon retains its position as UK’s top food export](#), this article by **SeafoodSource** highlights that Scottish Salmon is the most popular UK food export, with **£828 million of sales in 2025**. France was the largest international market for Scottish Salmon (accounting for **42% of sales**) followed by the United States. The Asian market has grown by **over 18%**, with most of this growth coming from China and Vietnam.
- ◆ Online industry magazine **Aquafeed** published an [article](#) in early 2026 which took an optimistic view for the future of aquaculture in the UK. The reasons they identified as indicating potential growth for the industry included the diversification of UK aquaculture beyond salmon farming; continuing investment; supply chain innovations; and the strength of R&D in UK aquaculture, as a result of collaboration between companies, universities, and the public sector.
- ◆ The [National Library of Scotland](#) provides free access to a range of [eResources for Scottish businesses](#). These include access to market reports like IBISWorld’s “Aquaculture in the UK” report.

The Information Service has access to a number of databases which can offer more detail on this industry. Some of these reports are listed below - if you would like to be sent extracts from any of these reports, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email info@bgateway.com.

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How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway's online guide to [Competitor Analysis](#) explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they're doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

- ◆ General business directories such as [Yell](#) ,[Thomson Local](#) or [Google Maps](#)
- ◆ Trade specialists like [EuroPages](#) (European directory), [The Wholesaler](#) or [Free Index](#)
- ◆ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as [Kompass](#)

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members' directory; find your local Chamber on the [Scottish Chambers](#) website.

Once you've identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

- ◆ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
- ◆ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company's website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company's activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company's partners or suppliers
- ◆ Search for information on limited UK companies via the [Companies House](#) website
- ◆ Gain an insight into your competitor's performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**



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What about suppliers?

[Choosing and Managing Suppliers](#) can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**.

Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway's guides on [Market and customer research](#) will help you to identify new trends, opportunities, customers and competitors.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can't find what you're looking for from these websites, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- ◆ Access the latest population estimates from the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- ◆ Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the [Census Area Profiles](#). Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- ◆ [Understanding Scottish Places](#) has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- ◆ [Scottish Government Statistics](#) provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing.
- ◆ [The Scottish Household Survey](#) provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- ◆ [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.



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How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

Accountancy

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland's (ICAS) ["Find a Chartered Accountant"](#) tool

Funding

[Practical information](#) on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

Insurance

[Business insurance guide](#)

Legal Help

Gov.uk ["Licence Finder"](#) tool

Law Society of Scotland's ["Find a Solicitor"](#) tool

Pricing

Business Companion [Pricing & payment guide](#).

Please note: the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

Promotion

[BG guides to Marketing](#)

Training

[Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work](#)

[Funding for training](#)

[Small Business Bonus Scheme \(Scotland\)](#)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

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You must not rely on the information in the report as an alternative to advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions speak to your Business Gateway Advisor or consult an appropriately qualified professional.

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