



Contact: Gavin Gibbons

(703) 752-8891
ggibbons@NFI.org

Coalition of Drs Reassure Consumers about Tilapia

Letter from experts takes aim at sloppy suggestion that tilapia is unhealthy

July 17, 2008 Washington, DC – In response to confusing reports, an international coalition of more than a dozen doctors [spoke out](#) today to clarify that fish like tilapia are low in total and saturated fat, high in protein and clearly part of a healthy diet.

A report from Wake Forest University in the July issue of the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* about the types of fats in popular seafood has led to reports that bacon, hamburgers, and doughnuts are a better choice than certain fish.

The 16 dietary fats experts, led by Dr. William Harris of the Sanford School of Medicine, write, "Replacing tilapia or catfish with 'bacon, hamburgers or doughnuts' is absolutely not recommended."

In explaining the specifics of the omega-3 versus omega-6 debate, the researchers note that omega-6s are not only found in fish like tilapia, but vegetable oils, nuts, whole-wheat bread and chicken. They go on to highlight the fact that the American Heart Association and the American Dietetic Association agree that, "omega-6 fatty acids are, like omega-3's, heart-healthy nutrients which should be part of everyone's diet."

The coalition, including one expert from Wake Forest University, says unequivocally that while they are not rich in omega-3 fatty acids, fish like catfish and tilapia, "should be considered better choices than most other meat alternatives."

"In this letter we see doctors from schools in England, Germany, Korea and Australia teaming up with researchers from US institutions including Sanford School of Medicine, Penn State and Harvard School of Public Health to say *wait a minute*, what you are reading in the press is misleading," said Jennifer Wilmes, registered dietitian with the National Fisheries Institute. "It's heartening to see careless, sound-bite-science being challenged."

For more than 60 years, the National Fisheries Institute (NFI) and its members have provided American families with the variety of sustainable seafood essential to a healthy diet. For more information visit: www.AboutSeafood.com.

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