

# Introduction – Rainbow trout



© iStockphoto

# Introduction

Rainbow trout are caught, farmed and consumed worldwide, with the main producers in 2016 being the EU, Chile, Norway, Turkey and Iran<sup>1</sup>. Within the EU, the vast majority of rainbow trout comes from aquaculture with most of the EU supply being farmed and produced locally<sup>2</sup>. Rainbow trout are sentient beings and should be afforded a good quality of life in a farmed environment.

Imports within the EU come mainly from Turkey (fresh-water portion-size trout) and Norway (large sea-water reared trout for fillets), and the main importers are Germany and Sweden. In the UK, roughly 75% of trout farming is aimed at producing portion-size trout where rainbow trout are obtained as fingerlings, and reared in freshwater tanks, ponds, raceways and net cages (both in freshwater and seawater)<sup>3</sup>.

Compassion in World Farming's rainbow trout resources outline the issues and make recommendations on improving welfare in producing trout from 100g through to harvest size (both portion size and larger trout) in freshwater and seawater. In Europe, figures for rainbow trout production in 2015 were 243,155 tonnes of portion size trout (300-400g) and 142,469 tonnes of larger trout (approximately 1.5 kg)<sup>4</sup>. The production of large rainbow trout in sea water has increased in recent years and in 2016 accounted for 153,954 t while the production of portion rainbow trout has decreased and was 233,654 t (maximum in 2013 was 259,970 t)<sup>5</sup>.

Firstly, we present a welfare issues table outlining how these farming constraints affect physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing and natural behaviours in rainbow trout.

The next resource is our recommendations which explain succinctly the main issues and recommendations Compassion advocates for rearing this species. There then follows a more detailed document explaining the scientific data with which we base these recommendation upon. Both resources explore the issues based on a “good housing”, “good feeding”, “good health” and “opportunity to express appropriate behaviour” format.

The final section focuses on slaughter and includes slaughter welfare issues and guidelines for minimising stress and pain in rainbow trout. All animals reared for food should be slaughtered humanely. This means that they must be effectively stunned, rendered instantly insensible, and remain unconscious until death supervenes. The Compassion slaughter document outlines the welfare issues associated with gathering and moving fish for slaughter and the slaughter techniques themselves. It also includes welfare indicators to monitor the effectiveness of the slaughter process from harvest through to stunning and killing.



<sup>1</sup> [https://www.eumofa.eu/documents/20178/137160/Rainbow+trout\\_31-1.pdf](https://www.eumofa.eu/documents/20178/137160/Rainbow+trout_31-1.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/sites/fisheries/files/docs/body/trout\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/sites/fisheries/files/docs/body/trout_en.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://britishtROUT.co.uk/about-trout/trout-farming/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://feap.info/index.php/data/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.eurl-fish-crustacean.eu/fish/scientific-reports>