

# Alaska's Fishermen Snared in Russia's Sanctions

**U.S. seafood exports have dried up, while cheap Russian crab is undercutting local industry.**

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Crab made up 84% of all Russian seafood sales to Russia in 2018. **Pixabay**

Fishermen in Alaska claim they have been caught up in Russia's counter-sanctions, with Moscow's ban on western food imports blocking sales to one of their key markets while allowing cheap Russian seafood to flood into the U.S.

Russian seafood exports to the U.S. have jumped 69% since 2013 — the year before Russia blocked most imports of agricultural products from the U.S. and the EU in a tit-for-tat response to sanctions levelled against Russia after it annexed Crimea.

Alaska sold more than \$60 million of salmon, pollock and other fish to Russia in the year before sanctions, the Anchorage Daily News [reported](#), while Russia now sells \$521 million of seafood to the entire U.S.

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The warning comes from the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute — a trade body which says Russia is likely to continue boosting sales amid a \$7 billion investment drive and a goal of doubling global fish sales to \$8 billion by 2024.

The group also complained that despite Russia banning imports, the U.S. still allows Russian products to be imported with very low tariffs.

“Alaska and Russia harvest many of the same species and many Russia-origin products are available in the U.S. market, often at lower prices than comparable Alaska products,” the report said.

“As Russian seafood producers increase the quality and volume of products that compete directly with U.S production, the U.S. is unable to compete for a large and growing Russian domestic market.”

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