



# Recommended Pricing Strategy and Positioning

PRICE

Growing the market for Alaska oysters  
**2024**



**What is the most strategic B2B and B2C pricing and positioning strategy for Alaska oyster products?**

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This deck is part of a broader suite of resources that supports the [Alaska Oyster Food Roadmap](#).

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# 1 Executive Summary



Despite significant supply chain challenges, all eater segments have a high willingness to pay for Alaska products, so leveraging **premium positioning** can be an **effective scaling strategy** until the pricepoint of Alaska oyster comes down.

## 1. Supply Chain Challenges

In particular, long transportation distances, fragile shells, inconsistent quality, low yields, insufficient funding for rigorous testing, and a lack of cohesive distribution channels **impact the viability of exporting high volumes of fresh oysters at low prices.**<sup>1,2,3</sup>

## 2. High Quality & Premium Perception

Alaska oysters benefit from the “Alaska halo” effect, being perceived by eaters and B2B stakeholders as **higher quality, safer, and fresher than oysters from other U.S. regions.**<sup>1,2,3</sup>

Additionally, B2B stakeholders are willing to pay a premium for exclusive Alaska oysters, **valuing their strong sense of place and the stories of their producers.**<sup>4</sup>

## 3. High Willingness to Pay

The willingness to pay among the identified segments aligns with the premium prices of oyster products in the U.S. market for both raw and value-added formats in CPG and foodservice. **Alaska Visitors demonstrate a higher willingness to pay than Established Oyster Eaters, including for value-added options in CPG and fried formats in foodservice.** They do not have the strong association of raw oysters as inherently higher quality than value-added formats.<sup>1,2,3</sup>

## 2 Supply Chain Challenges Make it Difficult to Scale

Currently, the industry faces an inability to produce large volumes of oysters at low costs.

Current **barriers** to growth include:<sup>1</sup>

### Limited availability and reliable supply

- Oyster seasonality
- Labor shortages
- Low yields due to the inability to propagate in cold waters

### High cost for long transportation distances

- Maintaining freshness, and ensuring proper storage is a challenge.

### Lack of processing facilities

- Labor intensive shucking for commercializing in shucked formats (frozen/tinned)

### Fragile shells and inconsistent quality

*"We would need a shucker and packer infrastructure to be able to start a smoking line".*

**- Alaska Oyster Producer**

*"Part of the problem is our costs for production are very high. Our cost to do business as a small producer is extremely onerous. Additionally, shucking oysters is too time-intensive and requires trained staff."*

**- Alaska Fishing Captain**

<sup>1</sup>FCL Interviews with Industry Experts, 2024. <sup>2</sup>FCL Market Landscape Analysis, 2024.

### 3 Alaska Halo is Associated with Higher Quality and Premium Perception among Eaters

Exploratory segments **see aspirational value in Alaska**, from associations with "fresh and good," to high environmental quality.<sup>1,2</sup> Freshness and sustainability are attributes associated with the Alaska brand and also represent the most valued product claims for oysters.

*"Alaska pristine waters, low population density—halo around Alaska as an origin for food. Opportunity to leverage that."<sup>4</sup>*

**Marketing expert |  
Innovation for the F&B  
Mattson Co.**



#### Established Oyster Eaters

"I would definitely highlight that the oysters are from Alaska. I think that brings, an exotic appeal to it or, freshness or a higher standard because it's coming from a certain area of the world that's, like, you know, a little more pristine."<sup>3</sup>

**DScout Mission 2024 | Frequent Seafood Eater**



#### Alaska Visitors

"Some of the most fresh oysters come from Alaska, which means the quality of the meat's gonna taste so much better than other oysters that aren't as fresh and aren't as from a pure environment as Alaska."<sup>3</sup>

**DScout Mission 2024 | Alaska Visitor**

## 4 Premium Willingness to Pay for Raw Formats in CPG

CPG PRODUCT	\$ Willing to Pay   Established Eaters <sup>1,2</sup>	\$ Willing to Pay   Alaska Visitors <sup>1,2</sup>	\$ Average U.S. Market Price Range per Product
Seasoned Alaska Oysters (tinned)	\$4.50	\$14.26	\$4.5-10 [Crown Prince Natural - Ekone]
Seasoned Alaska Oysters (vacuum-sealed)	\$13.33	\$23.62	\$15 [Saltwater Grove Seafood]
Ready-to-eat Alaska Oysters Rockefeller (tinned)	\$12.00	\$15.61	\$79 [Mackenzie limited - Premium online store]
Ready-to-Eat Alaska Oyster Chowder (tinned)	\$9.86	\$10.71	\$8 [Bar Harbor clam chowder]
Whole Live Alaska Oysters	\$32.60	\$25.96	\$15-24 [Saltwater Grove Seafood]
Shucked & Frozen Half-Shell Alaska Oysters	\$19.43	\$26.33	\$19-80 [Dixon Fisheries-Taylor Shellfish Farms Co]
Shucked and Frozen Alaska Oyster Meat	\$20.00	\$24.15	\$7-20 [McLaughlin Seafood - Hoopers Island Oyster CO]

In general, the willingness to pay among the identified segments aligns with the premium prices of oyster products in the U.S. market.

**Alaska Visitors exhibit a greater willingness to pay than Established Oyster Eaters**, reflecting their desire for memorable and unique premium dining experiences, without the strong association of raw oysters as inherently higher quality.

Tinned formats show the lowest willingness to pay, while whole, live oysters have the highest. However, both remain in line with market prices for comparable premium products.

<sup>1</sup>FCL Validation Survey (N=453), 2024 | <sup>2</sup>FCL Needfinding Survey (N=368), 2024

## 5 Alaska Visitors **Pay More for Fried Oysters, Established Eaters Value Premium Raw Options in Foodservice**

<b>Foodservice Dish with Alaska Oysters</b>	<b>\$ Willing to Pay Established Oyster Eaters<sup>1,2</sup></b>	<b>\$ Willing to Pay Alaska Visitors<sup>1,2</sup></b>	<b>Average U.S. Market Price</b>
Raw Alaska Oysters in the Half Shell	\$26.27	\$27.96	\$3-5/oyster
<b>Alaska Oyster Po' Boy</b>	\$16.51	<b>\$28.79</b>	\$16-29
Crispy Alaska Oyster Bites	\$17.76	\$21.58	\$18-32
<b>Oysters Rockefeller</b>	\$23.82	<b>\$46.88</b>	\$14-22
Grilled Oysters	\$22.54	\$16.07	\$16-22
<b>Sea-cuterie Board Featuring Alaska Oysters</b>	<b>\$43.50</b>	\$13.74	\$30-85
Seafood Pasta Featuring Alaska Oysters	\$23.56	\$21.13	\$20-30

The willingness to pay for dishes featuring Alaska oysters varies significantly between Established Eaters and Alaska Visitors.

**Established Eaters** demonstrate the **highest willingness to pay for a Sea-cuterie Board and raw oysters**, reflecting their preference for **diverse premium seafood options and minimally processed dishes**.

**Alaska Visitors** are generally willing to pay a **premium for non-raw oyster dishes**, particularly enjoying **fried formats** such as the Alaska Oyster Po' Boy and Crispy Alaska Oyster Bites.

Overall, the findings suggest that **Alaska Visitors are more open to paying a premium for innovative fried dishes**, while **Established Eaters still associate raw offerings with premium pricing**.

<sup>1</sup>FCL Validation Survey (N=453), 2024 | <sup>2</sup>FCL Needfinding Survey (N=368), 2024

# 6 B2B Stakeholders Validate Premium Pricing for Alaska Oysters

B2B stakeholders are willing to pay a premium for Alaska oysters for several key reasons.

## 1. Inherently Premium:

Oysters are inherently seen as a high-end delicacy, and the Alaska label elevates this perception.

## 2. Unique Sense of

**Place:** Alaska oysters are deeply connected to their origin. Their story—tied to specific farmers, regions, and sustainable practices—adds uniqueness, making them more attractive as a crafted, exclusive ingredient for consumers and chefs.

## 3. Sustainable and

**Ethical Sourcing:** The demand for socially responsible and sustainably sourced products is driving premium pricing.

## 4. Market Expectation for Premium Conservas:\*

Unlike canned fish, which is often viewed as a commodity, tinned seafood made from Alaska oysters stands out as an artisanal product, offering higher margins and a distinct market position.

*“We buy some oysters that are very expensive, but they come with a story. We know the farmers that grow them. So I think a lot of that kind of comes with connecting. Who the person is who’s growing these oysters to why we are deciding to purchase them.”*

**- Executive Chef at a chain of seafood restaurants**

*“For buyers who are oyster eaters, it’s that sense of uniqueness and specialness. That’s important, the sense of place.”*

**- Science, Education, & Policy Director of a large oyster brand**

*“Oysters have some upscale kind of notion surrounding them. You know, it’s a special occasion type thing.”*

**- Owner of Alaska tourist-focused restaurant**

FCL Task 4 B2B Stakeholder Interviews (N=14), 2024.



**\*Conservas** refers to a traditional method of preserving premium-quality foods, especially seafood like tuna, sardines, mussels, and octopus, commonly associated with Spanish and Portuguese culinary traditions.

# 7 APPROACH

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## SOURCES

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**+150 National and International Kelp Products and Dishes** (websites and top U.S. supermarket immersions)

**18 Datasets** (SPINS, Mintel, Datassential, Nielsen, etc.)

**Established Eaters Needfinding Survey (n=296)**

**Exploratory Segments Qualitative Study (n=60)**

**Established Eaters Validation Survey (n=246)**

**Alaska Visitors Validation Survey (n=200)**

**Interviews with B2B stakeholders (n=14)** (e.g., R&D chefs, including an Indigenous chef, CPG brands, large distributors, and food historians)

Find the full bibliography: [here](#)

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**Identified** average pricing for kelp concepts across product categories. Compiled data on brands, product formats, pricing, narratives/branding into a comprehensive market landscape database.

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**Confirmed** consumer willingness to pay for different prioritized concepts through quantitative validation research.

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**Analyzed** demographics and buying behaviors for prioritized eater segments to identify average annual income and food expenditure, contrasting data with current market.

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**Synthesized** eater insights and market data to build recommended pricing strategy.

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**Validated** premium pricing with B2B stakeholders across identified channels where consumers expect to find or purchase Alaska oysters.

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# THANK YOU!

Questions? Please contact us at:  
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Visit the [Southeast Conference website](#) to access the Roadmap Resources Hub