HEILSUFRØÐILIGA STARVSSTOVAN
FAROESE FOOD AND VETERINARY AUTHORITY

Tórshavn, hin 20. februar 2026
Málnr.: 23/00986-3
By Bjørg Mikkelsen/updated

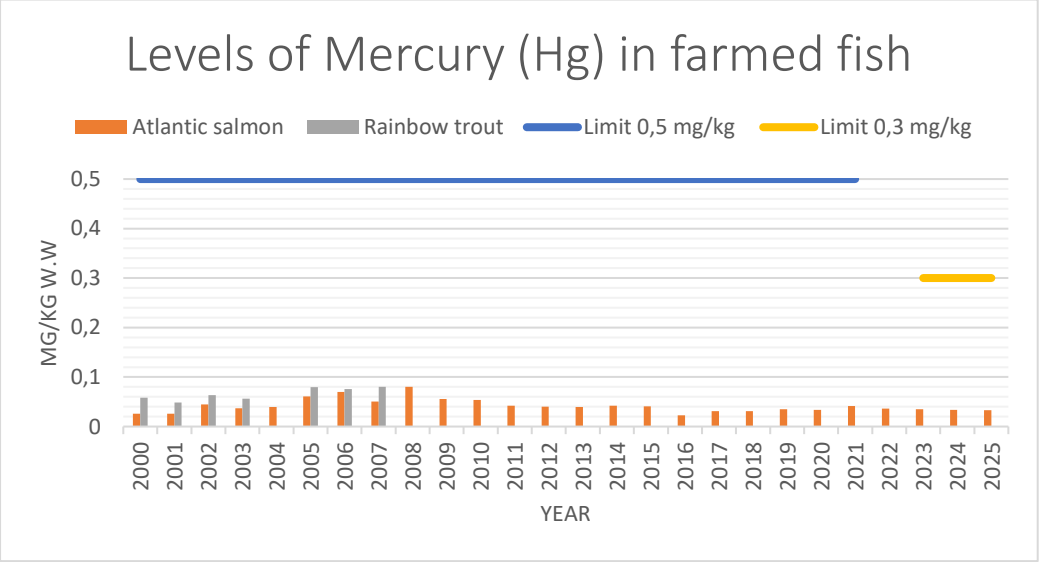
Levels of Heavy Metals in Faroese Farmed Fish 2000-2025

Summary: The levels of mercury were low, and cadmium and lead were under the detection limit. None of the heavy metals were present at levels above EU maximum limits.

The production of farmed salmon on the Faroe Islands is subjected to regular control by the Faroese Food, Veterinary and Authority (Heilsufrøðiliga Starvsstovan) for residues of veterinary drugs and environmental contaminants according to regulation (EU) 2022/931 and 2022/932[1] supplementing regulation to (EU) 2017/625[2]. Results of analysis for heavy metals in 1432 samples from Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) and rainbow trout (*Onchorynchus mykiss*) are presented in table 1.

The levels of Cadmium <0,002 mg/kg and Lead <0,02 mg/kg were under the detection limit. The levels of mercury were low (figure 1) and under the permissible level of 0,3 mg/kg[3].

Figure 1*. Levels of Mercury (Hg) in farmed Faroese Atlantic salmon and Rainbow trout from year 2000-2025. Unit mg/kg w.w. The EU maximum level for Mercury was 0,5 and changed to 0,3 mg/kg.*



[1] Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/931 of 23 March 2022 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council by laying down rules for the performance of official controls as regards contaminants in food. OJ L 162, 17.6.2022, p. 7–12.
Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/932 of 9 June 2022 on uniform practical arrangements for the performance of official controls as regards contaminants in food, on specific additional content of multi-annual national control plans and specific additional arrangements for their preparation. OJ L 162, 17.6.2022, p. 13–22.
[2] Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products,
[3] Faroese Departmental order no. 147/2009 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs (implements regulation (EC) 1881/2006; 2023/915).

***Table 1**. Mean levels of heavy metals (Hg, Cd and Pb) in farmed Faroese Atlantic salmon and Rainbow trout from 2000-2025. In total 1432 samples. Unit mg/kg w.w.*

Year	Species	Number of samples analysed	Mercury (Hg)	Cadmium (Cd)	Lead (Pb)
2000	Atlantic salmon	42	0,03	<0,003	<0,02
2001	Atlantic salmon	44	0,03	<0,003	<0,02
2001	Rainbow trout	3	0,06	<0,003	<0,02
2002	Atlantic salmon	54	0,04	<0,002	<0,02
2002	Rainbow trout	30	0,05	<0,002	<0,02
2003	Atlantic salmon	52	0,04	<0,002	<0,02
2003	Rainbow trout	5	0,06	<0,002	<0,02
2004	Atlantic salmon	40	0,04	<0,002	<0,02
2004	Rainbow trout	16	0,06	<0,002	<0,02
2005	Atlantic salmon	60	0,06	<0,002	<0,02
2006	Atlantic salmon	14	0,07	<0,002	<0,02
2006	Rainbow trout	16	0,08	<0,002	<0,02
2007	Atlantic salmon	11	0,05	<0,002	<0,02
2007	Rainbow trout	4	0,08	<0,002	<0,02
2008	Atlantic salmon	13	0,08	<0,002	<0,02
2008	Rainbow trout	5	0,08	<0,002	<0,02
2009	Atlantic salmon	53	0,06	<0,002	<0,02
2010	Atlantic salmon	70	0,05	<0,002	<0,02
2011	Atlantic salmon	54	0,04	<0,002	<0,02
2012	Atlantic salmon	50	0,04	<0,002	<0,02
2013	Atlantic salmon	82	0,04	<0,002	<0,02
2014	Atlantic salmon	71	0,04	<0,002	<0,02
2015	Atlantic salmon	59	0,04	<0,002	<0,02
2016	Atlantic salmon	68	0,02	<0,002	<0,02
2017	Atlantic salmon	71	0,03	<0,002	<0,02
2018	Atlantic salmon	73	0,03	<0,002	<0,02
2019	Atlantic salmon	58	0,03	<0,002	<0,02
2020	Atlantic salmon	69	0,03	<0,002	<0,02
2021	Atlantic salmon	62	0,04	<0,002	<0,02
2022	Atlantic salmon	82	0,04	<0,002	<0,02
2023	Atlantic salmon	34	0,04	<0,002	<0,02
2024	Atlantic salmon	33	0,03	<0,002	<0,02
2025	Atlantic salmon	34	0,03	<0,002	<0,02