

Alaska Pollock

The Alaska pollock (*Theragra chalcogramma*, *suketodara* in Japanese) is the mainstay of Kushiro's fishing industry. It is genetically similar to cod, and its principal habitats are the waters of the North Pacific, including the Sea of Okhotsk and the waters around Hokkaido. From winter to spring, schools of this cold-water fish migrate to Funkawan Bay near Hakodate in southwestern Hokkaido to spawn before feeding in the waters of Kushiro from summer to autumn.

The roe of the Alaska pollock is highly prized. The egg sacs are salted and sold as *tarako* or *mentaiko*, a popular topping for rice and pasta. The flesh of the fish is usually minced and processed to make *kamaboko* (fish cake) and fish sausage.