Mussels: sustainable and nutritious

Benefits of mussels

1 They are filter feeders. They feed exclusively on natural nutrients from the sea. In this way, they remove abundant constituents such as plankton and they **filter** the **water**.

2 Its low carbon footprint of about 0.6 kg CO_2 per kg of mussel meat makes mussels a **sustainable source of animal protein** (17.2 g protein/100 g).

3 Mussels are a **balanced food**. They are low in calories (103 kcal/100 g), low in fats (1 gr/100 g) and an excellent source of sodium (243 mg/ 100 g), vitamin B12 (20 µg/100 g) and omega 3 (684 mg/100 g).

4 They **store CO_2 in their shell** and in that way they are part of the short-term carbon cycle.

Benefits of suspended rope culture

Colruyt Group grows mussels according to the **longline or suspended rope culture method**. A technique that has been used for years in New Zealand and Southern Europe, but is new in Belgium. The lines on which the mussels grow float in the sea. The mussels do not grow on the seabed, as is often the case in the Netherlands. And that has a lot of benefits.

1 Mussels grown with suspended rope culture **grow 2 to 3 times faster** than in bottom culture, ensuring sustainable use of space.

2 The mussels contain **more meat**, have a **cleaner** shell and contain no sand.

3 Suspended rope culture is also possible in the harsh **conditions** inherent to the North Sea. Mussel lines are designed in such a way that they can move with the sea current.

4 When harvesting, the **seabed** remains untouched and thus spared.

5 Colruyt Group's aim is to combine aquaculture with **nature management**.

6 The sea farm can serve as a shelter and nursery for fish and other marine life, increasing populations and increasing **biodiversity** there.

Ready-to-eat mussels

Suspended rope culture: **after 1.5 years**
Bottom culture: **after 3 to 4 years**

A comprehensive **environmental monitoring programme** has been established for Sea Farm Westdiep that will further identify potential impacts of farming.

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