fish farming

Not all farming involves crops and livestock. Lots of people around the world farm fish. They raise and feed fish, such as carp, catfish, and trout, in ponds and lakes. They raise shellfish, such as prawns and oysters, in cages in the sea and even in waterlogged fields where rice grows.

Fish grow quickly in farms and lots of fish can be packed into a small area. This means farmers have a constant supply of fish to sell. Fish is an important source of protein for the planet’s growing population.

Ocean and farmed fish

It takes more effort to catch wild fish than farmed fish. The numbers of wild fish in rivers, lakes, and oceans are dropping because people are overfishing. Overfishing is when too many fish are taken from an area of water.

In China, fish farming is often connected with livestock farming. For example, farmers put pig manure in ponds. This encourages the growth of plant-like living things called algae, which young farmed fish eat.
One reason people are overfishing in some areas is to catch wild fish to make fishmeal. Many fish farmers feed fishmeal to their growing fish. It takes about 3 tonnes (3.3 tons) of wild fish to produce fishmeal to feed just 1 tonne (1.1 ton) of farmed salmon.

**Meat and fish**

This graph shows how much beef and fish were farmed between 1950 and 2000. An average figure has been worked out by dividing the amount of farmed fish or beef produced during a year by the total world population.

What can we see from the graph?

- At present, more beef is produced than farmed fish.
- The number of farmed fish is increasing. Over 50 years it has risen from less than 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) to 5 kilograms (11 pounds) per person.
- Beef production has only risen by about 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) over the same period. However, overall it has been falling since about 1975.

*This graph compares the changes in beef farming and fish farming over the past 50 years.*