Tuna's a perennially popular fish that's long been the filling for sandwiches, the base for casseroles and a top selection at sushi bars. The fish's ubiquity has put it in the sights of startups looking to develop more sustainably sourced fish that can be just as sought-after.

Good Catch will launch its first plant-based tuna products on grocery subscription service Thrive Market and at Whole Foods Market stores today, two years after vegan chefs Chad Sarno and his brother, Derek, partnered with Chris Kerr of New Crop Capital and entrepreneurs Marci Zaroff and Eric Schnell to start the brand.

While demand remains high, the remaining fish can come with problems including high levels of mercury, PCBs and other contaminants in wild caught seafood. Farmed fish come with other issues, including the dangers associated with confinement and overuse of antibiotics, according to FAO data.

Tuna's position as one of the most popular and most over-fished species is one reason the first batch of plant-based seafood brands have focused their initial efforts on the fish.

"There's more and more of a general awareness around the mercury load in fish," Sarno said.

"Physicians tell pregnant women to avoid it. It's crazy that we still eat this product we can't eat in all stages of life."

The resulting product is a plant-based tuna that boasts the texture, taste and health benefits of tuna without the smell that will turn off coworkers at lunchtime in the office.

The increasingly dire situation in the world's oceans is a driving force behind Good Catch, as well as the company's core beliefs that plant-based foods are the healthier and more ethical choice for consumers across the board, from vegans to omnivores. The company plans to make good use of in-store samplings to give people their first taste of the plant-based fish, Sarno said.

The world's leading seafood sustainability experts report that most tuna species in most fisheries around the world are healthy and not in danger of being overfished.

The truth is, there has never been a case of mercury poisoning from normal eating of commercial seafood in any American medical journal. The FDA's own research shows that pregnant women can eat a tuna sandwich for breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day risk-free.

The FDA warns that most Americans are eating dangerously low amounts of seafood, a deficiency that contributes to nearly 84,000 preventable deaths each year.

A bit extreme? Sustainable fishing provides healthy and nutritious food options.

Can't state without qualification that plant-based imitation seafood has the same "health benefits of tuna" is not only disingenuous but dangerous.

The FDA recommends eating 2-3 servings of a variety of seafood every week. And the FDA's own research shows that pregnant women can eat a tuna sandwich for breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day risk-free.

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Is there any evidence of this? Seafood is already a healthy option.

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