Grab this Fish Tale

Check the advisory!

Cut out the fat!

Bake, broil or grill!

Portion size matters!
It's clear Calumet anglers love their fishing, being outside and sharing good times with family and friends.

I like to catch fish, but I love to eat them.*

We don’t eat much fish when it is just the two of us.*

We have a get together.*

The kids like to come out fishing... maybe it's the water or the fresh air... but they get real excited.*

I like to catch fish, but I love to eat them.*

We don’t eat much fish when it is just the two of us.*

The kids like to come out fishing... maybe it's the water or the fresh air... but they get real excited.*

They know the local environment, the best fishing spots and have a few secrets for catching the fish that they want.

Here are a few more secrets everyone should know to ensure good fishing and good eating in Calumet!

It's a bit of nature out here... there are beavers and bats.*

* Quotes from Calumet anglers.
Wow, Manny!... You really caught yourself a big one!

You gonna fry it up?

Naw...

It’s too big.

I’m trying to catch smaller fish.

Smaller fish?!

How come?

‘Cause the big ones are more polluted.

I’ve heard talk ‘bout pollution in big fish, but son, I’ve eaten hundreds of fish out of this lake and not one of ’em ever tasted polluted to me.

That’s ‘cause it’s all chemical!... You can’t taste it or see it.

How d’ya know this?

In science class we learned all about pollution in the environment. We learned that...
Pollution... 

gets into...

lakes 'n rivers...

in all kinds of ways.

Pollution settles at the bottom...

Where fish like carp absorb it.

Pollution also builds up in large predators because they eat polluted small fish.

When we eat those large predators, we eat pollution.

Are you sayin' we can't eat the fish we catch? 

No perch? No catfish?

Well...

...Huh?!

Mom! Hello, Amelia.

Hello, gentlemen.

We were just askin' Manny 'bout pollution in the lake.

I heard. You can eat many of the fish from here, but there are a few things you have to do to keep it healthy.

First go online and check the STATE'S MEAL ADVISORY for the place you're going fishing. It has specific advice on which fish to eat or not and how much.

I need a computer, huh? Well, I don't have one... complicates life... just simple pleasures for me... like fishing.

Well then, just do like I said, throw back the big ones... just keep the small ones like perch 'n smelt.

Sometimes keep a walleye, bass or catfish that's just big enough to be a keeper....
That approach might work for two men... but children, young women and especially pregnant or nursing women, we really should check the state's advisory before eating any fish.

I learned that getting too much of the pollutants in some sport-fish can harm a child's development!

That's why it's important for parents to pay close attention to meal advice.

Well I got a wife 'n' kids... I'll do anything to protect 'em.

I don't have kids but I do share my catch with my neighbor's family...

Maybe they'll help me find these advisories on their computer?

So tell us more 'bout these advisories... how do they work?

Fish4health.net that's where I go and...

...click on either Illinois or Indiana.

And follow the links to the advisories for each location...

...easy!
The main pollutants in Calumet are PCB’s and they’re found mostly in the fat. Gut, skin and trim off all the fat…throw away everything but the meat!

Cut away fat along the back
Remove skin
Cut out fat along side
Trim off belly fat

What exactly does the chart mean by one meal a week, a month or six times a year?

UNLISTED FISH MEAL FREQUENCY for young women and children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IN</th>
<th>IL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Meal per Month</td>
<td>1 Meal per Week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So is that all you need to know?
Not quite...the advisories are not protective enough if you don’t prepare your fish right.
But that’s part of the fun...I looove cooking!
Tell us more!
Right on!

Also, if a fish is not listed in the advisory, that does not mean unlimited eating...right Manny?

Well for example, take carp from Wolf Lake... if Manny or I ate a meal of it, then we should not eat any other sport fish for a full month.

The main pollutants in Calumet are PCB’s and they’re found mostly in the fat. Gut, skin and trim off all the fat...throw away everything but the meat!
Then you cook the fish to remove any remaining fat by either grilling, broiling or baking on a rack.

Sorry fellas, no deep frying and no soup or gravy... throw out the drippings.

Now you're ready to eat, but remember serving size is SUPER IMPORTANT!

2 oz = Serving for everyone under 2 years old.

These portion sizes are for uncooked fish.

50 lbs  70 lbs  90 lbs  110 lbs  130 lbs  150 lbs  170 lbs

So that's it, huh?... Let's see... First, check the advisories for species, size and meal frequency... Second, skin, gut and trim... Third, cook on a rack and throw away the drippings. Fourth, eat the right portion size.

I suppose I can always fry up some farm raised catfish from the store.

I know... I've heard it.

That seems easy enough.

Well, Manny, we have to go! I hear your dad honking!

Bye! Nice seein' ya!
One week later.

Say, isn't that Joe fishin' over in that roadside pond?

Yeah, pull over!

Hey, Joe! How's it goin'?

Whatcha catchin'?

Hey fellas! Come 'n join me! I'm catchin' lots of largemouths!

Holy smokes! You ain't lyin'!

Eat 'em!

Whatcha fixin' to do with 'em?

I wouldn't eat anything that comes out of these roadside ponds.

'Cause they're probably polluted from road runoff and industry.

Say, why don't cha come with us? We're on our way to Powderhorn Lake!

Just throw your stuff in back and hop aboard!

you probably wanna put those back before we go.

Yeah, these days movin' fish around could spread diseases...

...like the deadly VHS virus! It's killin' fish across the midwest.
Is that the problem with those Asian carp we keep hearin' about?

Could be, but the biggest problem is they eat so much it ruins fisheries!

So the fishin's good at Powderhorn?

There are some big ones. So it's the challenge we go for.

The fish there are tested for pollution and the levels are pretty low...

Other good places to catch fish for eatin' are Wolf Lake and the County Parks and Forests in both states, where the catfish are stocked.

Still oughta check advisories for the fish you plan on keeping.
I pick up a little trash each time I come out... Cleanin' up nature and our image at the same time.

If everybody pulls up or beats down the brush to get close to the edge, erosion will silt up the lake and make it no good for fishing.

Here we are!

Take care of these places we enjoy for our kids and their kids.

We wanna be good fishermen.

I like to pick a spot that's already mostly open to water.

I pick up a little trash each time I come out...

Got one!

Can it get any better?

Hmmm, I don't think so,... beautiful lake, fish are biting and good friends!
After a great day our three anglers head back to the parking lot. Whoa, what's up with that! Looks like he's using a bucket of soapy water to clean his boat.

It gets zebra mussels and their larvae off if you don't want to carry them from lake to lake.

They can live for days out of water. Here's one.

Zebra mussels can ruin a lake when they eat everything at the bottom of the food chain.

I'm too tired tonight. Tomorrow I'll wash my equipment with soap and hot water.

Homeward bound... Thanks, it was fun. I'm feelin' I need to know a bit more before comin' out again.

That's easy! Start with the extra info on the back of this comic book!
Sources of...
**Meal Advice and Health Information for Eating Sport Fish**

Different sources sometimes make very similar points in different ways - they may even sound like they don’t agree. Don’t worry; follow the one that makes the most sense to you.

**“Fish4Health.net”**

http://fn.cfs.purdue.edu/fish4health/

- Meal advice for Illinois, Indiana, and most other states
- Información en Español
- Fish cleaning and preparation videos
- Meal advice for the fish you buy

**Illinois Department of Natural Resources:**

http://dnr.state.il.us/fish/digest/ (2010 Illinois Fishing Information)

- Available in print where fishing licenses are sold

**Indiana Department of Health:**

http://www.in.gov/isdh/23650.htm

- Link to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website for interactive learning

Much in the comic is based on The Field Museum’s participatory research with Calumet Anglers and their families in the summers of 2002 and 2003. Find the research report at www.humanecologyreview.org/pastissues/her151/westphaletal.pdf.

Questions or comments?
Contact Mario Longoni at mlongoni@fieldmuseum.org

Bobby Garro Sutton, illustrator.

Funded in part by:
Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation
U.S. Forest Service, Northern Research Station

A publication of

**The Field Museum**

Environment Culture and Conservation
A Division of Science