

Cockles

The common cockle provides important provisioning services from food production to shell by-products.



COCKLES

COCKLES project has been collating evidence and data from the 5 partner countries: Portugal, Spain, France, Ireland and the UK, to demonstrate the substantial role played by the common cockle* in provisioning, regulating as well as providing cultural and supporting services.

*Common cockle is *Cerastoderma edule*

Provisioning services

Provided by the common cockle



Co-Operation for Restoring
Cockle Shellfisheries
and its Ecosystem Services
in the Atlantic Area (AA)



Interreg
Atlantic Area
European Regional Development Fund



EUROPEAN UNION

→ Food production

Humans have gathered cockles for consumption since the Neolithic times.

Often considered as the “poor man’s food” in the past, cockles are becoming popular again for their taste and nutritional benefits.



Today a multinational industry has grown around the processing and supply of cockles to markets across countries from northern Atlantic Europe.

This industry supports long-established livelihoods in coastal communities.

→ Shell by-products

Cockle shells can be used for a variety of purposes, including chicken grit, aggregate and ornamental uses.



Unlike other bivalves, cockle shells do not break down into sharp shards so the crushed shells are useful for feeding chickens to help digestion and to provide calcium for strong eggs.

The incorporation of crushed shells into building material aggregate helps reduce water demand and extends setting times of mortar.

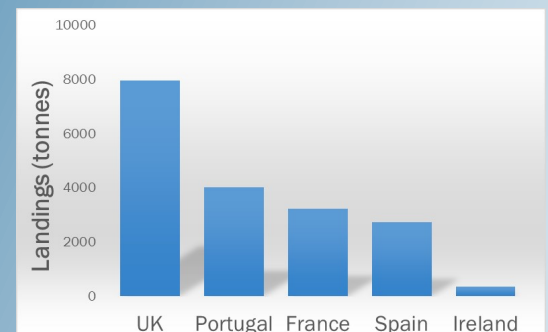
Cockle shells can also be used as an ornamental surface covering for pathways, gardens and walls.

→ Economic values

A tonne of fresh living cockle can vary from 1,000 € to 5,700 € depending on the market region.

The average market price of shell aggregate is approximately 1,400 € per tonne of shell (range: 400-2400 €).

This figure shows the average landings of cockles per tonnes across the 5 partner countries during the period of 2015-2019.



NB: Spain values are underestimated since only Galician landings are reported here.