

DRAFT

National Sea Grant College Program



SAFE SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD SUPPLY

“I love working with Oregon State University, and Sea Grant in particular has helped establish a good connection between Oregon’s fishing industry and academia....”

– Al Pazar, crab fisherman

THE ISSUE

Rising demand for seafood, coupled with the decline of many major U.S. fisheries, has led to a staggering **seafood trade deficit of \$8 billion per year**. Aquaculture creates important new opportunities to meet the increased demand for seafood, but a number of questions and concerns must be addressed for its full potential to be realized. With international seafood imports on the rise, and **fish diseases** and **contamination** escalating, the safety of our seafood is a growing concern.

Sea Grant works to ensure a sustainable supply of safe seafood for our Nation. A dynamic link between scientific information providers and information users, Sea Grant leads innovative research and outreach programs, and furthers the effectiveness of the efforts of our federal, state, and local partners. Located within the communities they serve, Sea Grant experts are an integral and trusted resource for coastal residents and decision-makers.

SEA GRANT WORKS TO:

Ensure the sustainability of fisheries: Engage harvesters, recreational fisherman, producers and managers in ways to minimize threats, and enhance the productivity and management of wild fisheries.

Support a viable domestic seafood industry: Provide innovative approaches and techniques that ensure financial competitiveness and environmental responsibility.

Ensure the health and safety of seafood: Enhance training and technical assistance programs related to the application of standards for safe domestic and imported seafood.

SEA GRANT BRINGS THESE UNIQUE ASSETS TO EMPOWER CITIZENS

- Identifies and implements innovative management approaches
- Supports a viable domestic aquaculture industry
- Partners with federal, state, and local agencies to deliver seafood science to consumers and businesses
- Develops new seafood products and innovative marketing approaches
- Promotes application of standards for seafood safety
- Educates consumers about the sustainability and safety of seafood choices



SEA GRANT IMPACTS: BALANCING HUMAN & ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS

ENSURES THE SUSTAINABILITY OF FISHERIES: EMPOWERING CONSUMERS

Numerous organizations have developed seafood guides to inform consumers about sustainable seafood choices. However, many of the guides offer conflicting information, causing confusion to consumers. Moreover, there is no consensus on what constitutes “sustainability” among the various organizations. As an independent third-party, Sea Grant provided an unbiased solution to these problems—*A Consensus Seafood Guide*.

The Guide allows consumers to review the ratings provided by organizations that study fish populations to help make more informed seafood choices. (Rhode Island)

ENSURES THE SUSTAINABILITY OF FISHERIES: INNOVATIVE RESEARCH AND OUTREACH

In Oregon, Sea Grant helped facilitate the implementation of “Pacific Fish Trax”, an innovative research and outreach effort to encourage consumers to buy fresh, locally-caught fish from local fishermen. This marketing approach uses a bar-coding system that traces the history of fish from ocean to market. At

specially-designed supermarket kiosks, consumers scan the barcode on their purchase and are introduced to the local fishermen who supplied their meal. Once home, consumers can access the Pacific Fish Trax website to learn where the fish was caught, its temperature history and other information. In addition to informing consumer choices, this project has great potential to ensure sustainable domestic fisheries. (Oregon)

SUPPORTS A VIABLE DOMESTIC SEAFOOD INDUSTRY: INCREASING FUEL EFFICIENCY

The Gulf and South Atlantic shrimp industries have experienced seven consecutive years of economic crisis due to low prices for shrimp and escalating diesel fuel costs. Recognizing the need to improve the economic performance of shrimp fishing, Sea Grant helped evaluate and promote innovative fuel-efficient fishing gear. This groundbreaking work has resulted in an average reduction in fuel use of 29 percent industry-wide. Roughly half of the fleet has since converted to the new gear, resulting in an estimated fuel savings of 2.5 million gallons, for a total cost savings of \$8.5 million per year. (Texas)

SUPPORTS A VIABLE DOMESTIC SEAFOOD INDUSTRY: ENSURING FINANCIAL COMPETITIVENESS

Shrimp fishermen in South Carolina are experiencing increased financial strain as consumers are increasingly choosing cheaper, imported farmed shrimp from Thailand.

Recognizing the need to improve the economic viability of American shrimp fisheries, Sea Grant helped provide a unique solution. Shrimp fishermen from South Carolina were flown to Alaska to learn better business practices through a series of workshops conducted by their Alaskan counterparts. Alaskan fishermen have experienced similar economic struggles amid increased imports of farmed salmon, and were able to share strategies to help South Carolina shrimp fishermen forge a new way of doing business. (Alaska, South Carolina)

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