



Wild, Natural & Sustainable®

Shellfish Committee Meeting
Monday, October 29, 2018 | 1:30pm
Easter Island Room, Hotel Captain Cook, Anchorage, AK

Draft Agenda

I. ROLL CALL

Present:

Chair, Rodger Painter
Jim Stone
Joe Thompson
Jake Jacobsen
Linda Kozak
Typson Fick
Steven Minor
Edward Poulsen
Dan Sullivan

Absent

Jim Carroll

Visitors

Flora, China OMR
Jason Smith, Undercurrent News
Tomi Marsh, Board Member

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- a. Minor moved to approve the agenda. Jacobsen seconded; motion was approved.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Jacobsen moved to approve the minutes from previous meeting. Thompson seconded; motion was approved.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. None

V. OLD BUSINESS

- a. None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review new Policy and Procedure document

- None

b. Review of ASMI budget items, monies collected from shellfish

Discussion ensued around whether the Ugly Crab campaign was showing a return on the investment made in the promotion, or rather a success. Victoria Parr, Domestic Marketing Director, joined the meeting and noted that this campaign was less than a year old but not a significant fiscal investment. The committee deliberated the risk of bringing down the category of Alaska crab and whether the committee supported the campaign continuing. The general consensus was that the focus should be on the sustainability and full utilization aspects. Minor noted his concern that at retail, the #2 “Ugly Crab” would bring down the whole category of Alaska crab. The group discussed the need to differentiate between Alaska and Canadian products in certain markets and the struggle Ugly Crab sees in the seafood case by comparison.

The TAC was discussed and whether the potential new demand would be able to be met by the industry. Parr noted that interest and anecdotal responses were the measure of success around Ugly Crab.

Painter asked for a motion to make a recommendation. Stone proposed that the campaign be allowed to continue and give it more time. Minor noted that the campaign should be primarily focused on foodservice and Kozak further commented that the Domestic Program should be mindful of processor concerns around Retail spaces and niche markets as the campaign moves forward. Thompson said that he would like to hear specific measurements of success beyond anecdotal responses. Discussion ensued around what a further measurement might look like to discuss a year from now. Jacobsen addressed the new presence of Tom Enlow from UniSea and Alexa Tonkovich, ASMI Executive Director, in the meeting audience.

The general group consensus was to continue the campaign for another year, focusing on the foodservice sector and niche markets. Emphasis should be on sustainability aspects with measureable results in report format at next year’s All Hands meeting.

c. Marketing work by shellfish processors

Kozak proposed the need for a generic campaign for wild Alaska crab with an emphasis on the sheer distance of coastline where crab is harvested. Her concern is the volatility of

stocks and how to focus ASMI's efforts on marketing crab. Minor noted that the most stable crab fishery was renamed as Golden crab, but nothing further came from the change outside of individual company efforts. The group felt that there had not been much, if any, marketing attention given to golden crab by ASMI.

Poulsen noted that a variety of assets including infographics, educational videos, recipes and images from chefs, as well as videos and photos from vessels would help the industry from a marketing standpoint. Fick pointed out the logistical challenges ASMI likely faces gathering assets for the golden king crab fishery. Discussion ensued about the need to generally educate consumers and industry on the name change of golden king crab. There was a consensus that this fishery stands to be an opportunity in the face of other volatile fisheries and China tariffs. The group noted the problem around transparency of numbers caught from fishing vessels in the golden crab fishery and how to improve reporting with assistance from ADF&G.

Jacobsen noted the potential need for ASMI to craft messaging around the closure of the red king crab fishery if the scenario comes to fruition. Discussion ensued on whether the group should make a recommendation on the fishery closure and at what point the message should be crafted. The group decided that no action was necessary.

d. New innovations in shellfish processing or marketing

Fick addressed the logistics of shipping live crab. ASMI setting an industry standard of how to ship individual species of crab, perhaps from the Technical program, would be helpful for innovation.

Thompson noted that the ASMI Technical program addressed a listeria paper and was interested to know what, if any, would be the next step.

Fick asked about the work being done at Tidal Vision and the potential use of byproducts. There was no response from the group.

e. Sustainability certifications

Jacobsen noted that Norwegian crab fisheries are looking to be certified by RFM, MSC, or similar agencies, with his recommendation being RFM. Sullivan noted that the best thing the group can do is market RFM. The group agreed that backing RFM is the best way forward. Discussion ensued around the logo and whether ASMI should amplify and/or revamp it, particularly in the face of ASMI's current budget. It was debated whether promotion of RFM met the mission of ASMI and whether education and training in the industry would meet that need.

f. Shellfish supply review and trends

Painter presented numbers around permits for oysters and kelp harvesting. Kelp is being produced but markets outside of Alaska are slim. Fick noted that oysters don't currently contribute to the ASMI funding, however Painter noted that they would as the farming grows.

The Alaska Mariculture Development Plan was introduced by Board Member Tomi Marsh. She asked the group about their encounters, if any, with PSP and its testing. She noted they've seen levels of 2,000 in the geoducks along the outer coast, where 80 is passing.

Painter noted that as Hong Kong is not subject to tariffs, whether it was an option for crab to be sold across the border in China. Flora from the ASMI China program spoke about the current landscape of US products potentially crossing the border and the challenges there.

Fick posed whether there is an opportunity to market Alaska Dungeness crab during the window while it is in season. Thompson said that there is a huge demand and opportunity for Alaska Dungeness frozen sections. He felt that it would be difficult to differentiate from Southeast and the coast for live crab. Minor noted that there is a challenge to find new markets for live king crab that was lost by China tariffs and competition from Russia.

g. Directions for ASMI shellfish marketing efforts

The committee addressed the questions set by Alexa.

VII. FINAL COMMENTS

- a. None

VIII. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING

IX. ADJOURN

- a. Stone moved to adjourn. Minor seconded; meeting adjourned at 4:09 pm.