



Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) Domestic Marketing Committee Meeting
Friday, November 7, 2025
Hilton Hotel Anchorage Dillingham/Katmai Room
Anchorage, AK 99501
11:00 – 4:00 PM

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Call to Order

- Called to order at **11:06 AM** by Chairman Whitney

2. Anti-Trust Statement

- Read by Vice Chair Cusack

3. Roll Call- Present

- Lilani Dunn
- Kendall Whitney
- Pat Shanahan
- Mike Cusack
- Jeff Welbourn
- Thea Thomas
- Steven Becic
- John Daly
- Ron Christianson
- Director Michael Erickson

4. Approval of Agenda

- Motion: Shanahan
- Second: Welbourn
- **Approved**

5. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (August 29, 2025)

- Motion: Thomas
 - Second: Cusack
 - **Approved**
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6. Public Comment

- No public comment

7. Species & Operational Committee Discussion

Whitefish

- Opportunities to support surimi in the domestic market (raw material utilization)
- Growth potential in poke and sushi applications
- Need to build awareness and drive usage of flatfish over time
- Atka mackerel presents strong opportunity due to reduced mackerel quota
- Continued support for USDA global food aid programs
- **Herring Discussion:**
 - Suggested move to Salmon Committee
 - Market opportunity exists but requires producer-driven initiative
 - Recommendation for ASMI to develop a marketing strategy
 - Potential applications include pet food (noted challenges)
 - Consideration of forming a Herring Committee

Salmon

- Positive outlook: strong runs and balanced market value
- Momentum remains strong despite trade barriers—continued effort needed
- Focus areas: pink and keta salmon
- Canned salmon remains significant (approx. 35% of volume)
- Opportunities for pink salmon product innovation (potential SK grants)
- Promote **Certified Seafood International (CSI)** as alternative to MSC
- Suggestion to engage with MSC on improving certification processes
- Increase pink salmon presence in foodservice
- Explore reprocessing opportunities in other countries (e.g., Mexico)

Shellfish

- Support for Alaska Dungeness crab positioning in frozen category
- Emphasis on quality over size
- Opportunity to expand into East Coast markets (beyond SF/Seattle hubs)
- Bering Sea crab fisheries showing signs of recovery
- Noted hybridization trends (Bairdi/Opilio) and need for clear size/labeling marketing



Halibut & Sablefish

- Market improvements noted
 - Halibut and cod shortages creating opportunity for sablefish
 - Increased domestic acceptance of smaller fish sizes
 - Continued support recommended
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8. Committee Responses

- Committee discussed and addressed submitted questions
 - See attached materials for full responses
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9. Old Business & Good of the Order

- Director Megan Rider provided update on pet food RFP and brand development
 - Cusack expressed appreciation for:
 - USDA global food aid program
 - Ongoing efforts of ASMI staff
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10. Adjournment

- Motion: Shanahan
- Second: Thomas
- **Approved**

2025 ASMI All Hands on Deck

Answers to ASMI Operational Committee Questions

DOMESTIC MARKETING

Please review the summaries of the species committees and incorporate relevant points when considering the following topics as points for discussion by your committee (*not all questions require answers*). Please provide a summary to the ASMI Board of Directors.

· **If relevant to your committee: How are changes in foreign trade policies impacting the market? Are you experiencing, or do you foresee, shifts in exports, markets, regions. If so, where and how? How could ASMI help?**

- Russian seafood imports continue to cause concern; maintain preparedness for market shifts and ensure ASMI remains ready to respond quickly to changing conditions for Alaska seafood species.
- Continue to support “Made in the U.S.A” messaging and highlight Alaska’s harvesters as the foundation of the brand and industry.
- Continue to promote CSI as an alternative to MSC, with emphasis on product origin, transparency and promotion.

· **How can ASMI make an immediate difference in the marketplace?**

- Flatfish promotions in food service and retail
- Continued support for surimi development in the domestic market; Growing opportunities for poke and sushi applications.
- Continued support of the pink salmon campaign in the domestic market place
- Emphasize the high protein content of Alaska seafood in marketing and education efforts to highlight its nutritional value & calorie ratio etc, particularly in retail space.

· **For Domestic & International: What resources can ASMI provide to best help retailers and foodservice operators?**

- Create new diverse for Dungeness; food service and retail
- Create new diverse recipes for sablefish; foodservice and retail
- Create a sablefish trim guide
- Continue to differentiate from Alaska halibut from Atlantic halibut for the industry customer
- Expand the pink salmon marketing template to more species
- Collaborate with comms on influencers and Alaska athlete marketing

· **After reviewing the summaries from the ASMI Species Committees, do you have any recommendations for which your operational program should take action?**

Whitefish

- Continued support for surimi development in the domestic market; Growing opportunities for poke and sushi applications.
- Build awareness and usage promotions for flatfish

Salmon

- Momentum remains high, continue to support, especially for pink and keta.

- Canned salmon remains vital, with ~35% of production going into cans; continued recognition encouraged.
 - Elevate pink salmon fillet and valued add in foodservice to drive broader adoption.
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Shellfish

- Support for Alaska Dungeness crab. Product is sorted for quality, not size, and positioned for the frozen section. Goal: establish top-quality frozen Dungeness in the domestic market.
 - Opportunity to expand marketing efforts to East Coast foodservice, beyond current hubs in San Francisco and Seattle.
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Halibut & Sablefish

- Strong market improvements and shortages of halibut and cod have created new openings for sablefish domestically.
- Smaller sablefish are now more accepted domestically; continue to support market development efforts for these products.
- Create new diverse recipes for sablefish

·The word 'sustainability' has become ubiquitous in the marketplace. How should Alaska differentiate itself? What does Alaska do that no one else does? Are there non-sustainability stories that could be highlighted to better tell the Alaska story?

- Continue to promote CSI as an alternative to MSC
- Highlight gear innovation stories told directly by harvesters, showcasing real-world sustainability practices.
- Tell the sustainability story from multiple perspectives, including harvesters, processors, scientists, and managers, to convey a more complete and authentic narrative.
- Lean into Alaska's core values, Wild, Natural, Sustainable, to reinforce authenticity and connect consumers to the source and forward thinking.

· Is there any action that this committee recommends the ASMI Board consider at All Hands, or in the near future?

- Suggestion to develop a herring specific committee with a focus on marketing strategy and an utilization the 2022 herring market feasibility report
- Continue to promote CSI as an alternative to MSC. Suggests that the board negotiate with MSC to help create a better and more equal process to certification for Alaska fisheries.
- Collaborate across programs in ASMI to develop multi-channel strategy to partner with Alaska Airlines, including opportunities to Alaska seafood in-cabin service, media, airport lounges, and campus initiatives. Explore opportunities to designate funding for such an initiative.

· The Alaska seafood industry plays an important role supporting ASMI and promoting the Alaska Seafood brand. Please share some examples of how your harvest group, business, affiliate organization or company supports ASMI or effectively promotes the Alaska Seafood brand.

- Use the Alaska Seafood logo and brand, including CSI when applicable, to reinforce authenticity and origin.
- Act as ambassadors for ASMI, ensuring the organization is represented at meetings, trade shows, and industry events.
- Maintain strong communication and participation in ASMI activities to strengthen collaboration between industry and staff.
- Support ASMI during FAM trips to help share the Alaska story with partners.
- Collaborate on promotions, including product sampling, trip logistics, recipe development, imagery, and media support.