



Liberia



Wild, Natural & Sustainable®

Alaska Global
Food Aid Program

Wild Alaska Canned Herring

ASMI teamed up with Samaritan's Purse, an international Christian relief organization, to introduce Wild Alaska Canned Herring in Liberia, West Africa. The Alaska global Food Aid Program provided nutritious Wild Alaska Canned Herring to over 500 victims of war including recovering child soldiers, victims of rape and abuse, and orphans and vulnerable children, as well as HIV positive men and women. Herring delivers health-promoting Omega 3-fatty acids, which are essential for the prevention of stunting and chronic malnutrition for the young participants under two years of age, and pregnant and breastfeeding mothers.

At the end of the first months of the pilot project, the overall number of malnourished participants decreased and the majority of participants were a normal, healthy weight. The HIV positive men and women in the Samaritan's Purse Voluntary Counseling and Training (VCT) Center were in greatest need of the herring and benefitted the most. Not only did the participants love the taste of the herring, but it also provided them with a great source of nutrients to help prevent against AIDS-related wasting and infections.

The only food that the individuals received from the VCT center was Wild Alaska Herring. Samaritan's Purse staff members said that before the pilot project, the patients would visit the clinic to get their medications, leaving before receiving counseling and checking their health status. Patients routinely receive full care and counselling, and staff at the center acknowledge the role of herring provided by the Alaska Global Food Aid Program (AGFAP) in providing an incentive for return visits of patients at risk. The center was located far from the coast and more than a day's drive from the capital city of Monrovia making it challenging to obtain any form of fish. Through AGFAP, others and HIV positive individuals, with a high risk of malnutrition, are able to eat Wild Alaska Canned Herring six times a week.



The pilot project made a documented and statistically significant impact on the nutritional status among all program participants, especially the HIV positive men and women in the VCT program. At the end of the pilot, 71% of the HIV-positive participants identified as mildly, moderately or severely malnourished at baseline improved significantly in terms of their nutrition status (80% of these improvements were to a normal, healthy body weight), and 42% of malnourished individuals overall improved their nutrition status and were considered to be well-nourished.

Samaritan's Purse has asked that ASMI GFAP extend the program, significantly in the VCT program, because it had such a big impact on the counseling center. Participants send their many thanks to AGFAP, and are excited that they will be receiving Alaskan Canned Herring for an additional five months, saying:

"The fish sent to Liberia, to Samaritan's Purse is very, very nice. Thanks for the fish! Bless you and your company!"