

DRAFT



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Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute
Seafood Technical Committee Meeting
May 22, 2014
9:00AM

PRESENT:

Hart Schwarzenbach, Chair
Joe Logan, Vice-Chair
Dan Block
Al Burch
Julie Decker
Alex Oliveira
Kenneth Lum

GUESTS:

Lisa Esparza, Ocean Beauty Seafoods
Kim Stryker, State of Alaska, Department of Environmental Conservations, Division of Environmental Health
Bruce Odergaard, Seafood Products Association

STAFF:

Randy Rice
Heather Carey

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hart Schwarzenbach at 9:12AM and Heather Carey called the roll. After additional committee members joined the meeting via telephone conferencing, it was determined that a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Julie Decker asked that a copy of the previous meetings minutes be sent to her as she had not received them. It was determined that Heather Carey would send a copy of the minutes to the entire committee and approval would be done via email follow-up. **Update:** On 5/23/14 the minutes were approved by the committee via email.

OLD BUSINESS:

USDA Future Nutrient Analyses of Alaska Fish Species:

Randy Rice went through the *Future Nutrient Analyses of Alaska Fish Species* document for the committee which was written by Dr. Joyce Nettleton.

- Nutrient data gaps exist for virtually all other Alaska Species
- Alaska Pollock would not appear to warrant additional nutrient analysis anytime soon
- Pink salmon data are based on only 3 samples
- King salmon data are missing all fat-soluble vitamins, several water-soluble vitamins and report data for 1-3 samples
- Similar data shortfalls exist for all Alaska crab species, sablefish (black cod) and halibut. For example, sole/ flounder and for rockfish, data are not species specific and are described only as "mixed species"

A discussion followed on the information presented. Joe Logan said that to him pink salmon is the next big ticket item and Mr. Schwarzenbach stated that there needs to be changes going forward. Dan Block asked if the committee was copied on the nutritionals that were submitted to the USDA and Mr. Rice replied that they had, but would follow up and re-send to all committee members. Mr. Rice talked to funding this project out of FY15 funds due to the late timing left in FY14 and not being able to get the project off the ground in the timeframe left in the fiscal year. Mr. Logan commented that it can be difficult to get pinks in June anyhow. Mr. Schwarzenbach asked that the motion be moved forward to at least go towards pink salmon and cod. Mr. Logan moved that we engage Dr. Nettleton and the committee to conduct the analysis for the USDA database on pink salmon and pacific cod to the value that we spent last year. Mr. Block seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Fukushima Radiation Update:

Mr. Rice walked the committee through the *Alaska Seafood and Fukushima Radiation Concerns* document, which is what is used when we receive inquiries regarding this topic and also the *fukushimafishfacts.com* document that was sent to the committee. Mr. Rice talked to expecting to have quite a bit of interest on this topic in Brussels, but that there wasn't much which he took as a positive sign. Hopefully this issue is on the decline. Kenneth Lum asked if the Alaska Seafood and Fukushima Radiation Concerns document was on the website, Mr. Rice said it isn't and asked if the committee would like it on the website? The committee recommended to Tyson Fick, Communications Director that he put it on the pressroom page on www.alaskaseafood.org so that it is available. Kim Striker spoke to working with Mr. Lum going forward, as Mr. Rice is retired as of June 30th. Mr. Rice also asked that any press releases on this topic be sent to Mr. Fick. A discussion followed on updating the document before being posted on the website. The decision was made to go ahead and post both documents with the edits. Al Burch stated that there was a program on the History Channel or National Geographic Channel the previous evening about the meltdown and he wasn't sure if it was a new or old program, but it might start the discussion again.

RFM Fishery Certification Program Update:

Mr. Rice spoke to two documents that were distributed to the committee; a press release dated April 25, 2014, titled *Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) Board Announces Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) Program Improvements* and also the *Alaska RFM Certification Program Improvement Work Plan*. Mr. Rice explained that the Board voted at the April meeting on improvements and enhancements to the RFM program and that ASMI would step up and declare ownership of the Alaska RFM program and set up an independent oversight committee. These are governance changes to enhance the credibility and transparency of the program, particularly in view of benchmarking exercises like the GSSI that are going on. Mr. Rice stated that if we are going to have a program that benchmarks well with GSSI and to better pass muster with the environmental groups, this is what we have to do. With regard to the *Alaska RFM Certification Program Improvement Work Plan*, Mr. Rice will be working with Peter Marshall who left SAI Global/ Global Trust and works under contract with Mike Cerne as an independent consultant. If ASMI is the owner of the scheme, we cannot also be the applicant. There will need to be new fishery applicants and we have to go out and recruit or talk to interest groups, such as asking PSPA if they want to be the client for salmon, asking AFDF if they want to be the client for cod, etc. ASMI, as the scheme owner, has to be separate from the fishery applicants for RFM Certification. ASMI is looking to pull in more Certification Bodies (CBs) so, it won't only be SAI Global/ Global Trust going forward. Mr. Rice spoke of the development of the Conformance Criteria Committee (CCC) with the aim to further formalize and make more transparent the makeup and workings of the CCC. Mr. Rice stated that the CCC will not be highly active and that we do not want them rewriting everything. They will need to review once a year and make sure everything is in compliance with FAO. The charge is to keep it simple and there will be a liaison between the CCC and ASMI Board of Directors. Mr. Schwarzenbach asked who will be on the committee and Mr. Rice replied that he will make recommendations as will Peter Marshall, that the ASMI BOD will decide who is ultimately placed on the CCC, but that it will be a balanced group of people and members with fishery and certification expertise. Mr. Rice stated that at this time, there will not be an NGO on the CCC, but that we may want to stay open to this possibility in the future. Mr. Rice talked to the possibility of a separate RFM website as there are constraints within the www.alaskaseafood.org website. Mr. Burch stated that he agrees with the criteria for the CCC, but has concerns about allowing an NGO on the committee.

Update of Chain of Custody for RFM Certification – Chain of Custody Documents:

Mr. Rice spoke to the guidance documents that would go out to those interested CB's that want to do RFM Chain of Custody audits. The documents have been reformatted and are much easier to read. He hasn't received a lot of new input, but did receive input from Allison Cochran at Trident Seafoods which would be folded into the final revision.

Mr. Rice asked if the committee has any changes, to please send them through as soon as possible. There is one interested CB, SCS that is interested in doing CoC audits.

NEW BUSINESS:

Fatty Acid Research Library:

Mr. Schwarzenbach asked Alex Oliveira to speak to the Fatty Acid Research. This research was conducted in Kodiak over several years with the focus being on approximate composition and fatty acid analysis, with data for close to 1000 fish. Samples were taken from all over the state, divided into all 5 pacific salmon species and three different degrees of water markings which are dark, semi-bright and bright, with a very comprehensive data set. The next step is to confer with the industry and find out how the data should be presented. Mr. Rice asked if this would be presented on a regional basis and it would be presented on a regional by species by water markings basis, as that is the way the spreadsheets are all set up. A discussion followed on how to best present and publish this data research. Mr. Rice asked about working with Dr. Nettleton and doing something with a USDA database effort. Ms. Oliveira talked to the different analysis methods between the ways this research was conducted (solvent extraction method) and how Dr. Nettleton conducts research (acid hydrolysis method). Mr. Rice suggested to the committee that the communication lines be opened between Dr. Nettleton and Ms. Oliveira. Mr. Lum asked who the funding for this research was through; it was CSR EES from USDA. It was suggested by Mr. Logan that this be finalized at the meeting in September.

Freezing, Partial Cooking, Parasite Destruction:

Mr. Schwarzenbach spoke to this being based on one specific guideline. Freezing is to be held at an ambient temperature of x and held at cold storage -4 degrees for days/ or one week. The verbiage is very vague and says freeze till hard frozen with no temperature listed, it doesn't say immediately and there aren't a lot of specifics, there is a lot of leeway in interpretation of how the fish should be frozen. Mr. Schwarzenbach spoke to cold storage having a hard time during the summer with the door opening and closing staying at the correct temperature, Ms. Striker asked if this has been problematic in the past and Mr. Schwarzenbach replied that it has not been, however, the movement towards people all over the states cooking salmon medium-rare and offering on menu's as medium-rare is increasing. Cooking to 145 degrees is a little dry and health inspectors are going into restaurants and asking for parasite destruction letters from companies. Ms. Striker said she can look for supporting documentation and work with her counterparts and get Mr. Schwarzenbach some answers. Mr. Logan said he can cooperate with Mr. Schwarzenbach that he gets calls from restaurants about health inspectors, foodservice very often. It was determined that this will be an agenda item for the September meeting, with Ms. Striker providing information to Mr. Schwarzenbach and thus being distributed to the committee.

MeHg Research Funding Needs:

Mr. Logan stated that Nick Ralston is a scientist and professor at the University of North Dakota who specializes in methylmercury, selenium and enzymes in the brain and who has done a lot of research with funding from the EPA. Mr. Logan would like to offer to the committee that they fund his current research being published. Ms. Striker asked if we have been in contact with Dr. Bob Gerlach who has been doing fish tissue monitoring for sometime in Alaska. Mr. Rice replied that he had and stated that his work focuses on content and that he is not looking at mercury selenium specifically. A discussion followed on whether or not it is part of ASMI's mission to fund this research. Mr. Rice asked if Professor Ralston would be able to publish his research by June 30th in order to use FY14 funding. The dollar amount that was presented for the funding is \$20K but Mr. Logan spoke to only allocating what the committee thinks is fair. Mr. Block motioned to allocate \$20K to Professor Ralston in furthering his efforts in publishing his mercury selenium data. Ms. Decker seconded, motion carried. Mr. Rice will reach out to Professor Ralston to look at timetable and talk to the ASMI fiscal team about the funds being used.

Fish Waste Discharge/ EPA Office ORD:

Ms. Decker asked to have this put on the agenda as it was brought to her attention by Brad Warren that there may be an interesting avenue within EPA to look at addressing this issue in a different way than has been done in the past. EPA is looking at potentially changing some of the communities in Alaska and whether they are designated as rural or non rural in relation to their affluent guidelines and how that would affect fish waste discharge which would affect a lot of the industry. Mr. Schwarzenbach spoke to there being a working committee here in Seattle who has been in direct contact with EPA for about 8 months now and explained that Ms. Decker is welcome to join that group if she would like to. Mr. Schwarzenbach spoke to this not being an ASMI area and that he is happy to provide the information on the committee to whoever would like to get involved.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

NSF Membership:

Ms. Oliveira spoke to trying to create a center for research and education in the area of seafood with Oregon State University, Washington State University and University of Alaska at Fairbanks partnering with them and putting together information for the National Science Foundation to get funding for the creation of this center. Mr. Schwarzenbach asked how this would fit in with ASMI. Ms. Oliveira replied that if it is centered in Kodiak, we could use the center for future research and that it would be beneficial for Alaska. Mr. Schwarzenbach asked that Ms. Oliveira please keep the committee updated.

Consideration of Petitioning FDA to Eliminate the Canned Salmon Standard of Identity:

Mr. Lum stated that this came up as a result of activity at FDA and asking for status of two petitions to change the standard so that we could keep doing skinless/ boneless canned salmon. Because of all of that activity, can we just drop the standard of identity? Mr. Rice asked if there could be anything bad about doing away with the standards of identity. There have been some concerns, but it is enough to pump this issue off for a while. Mr. Lum stated that there will be more to come later.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Rice passed out a flyer for the World Seafood Congress being held September 5-10, 2015 in England to committee members in which he sits on the organizing committee.

Mr. Lum presented Mr. Rice with a frying pan to help with all those razor clams as this is his last Seafood Technical Meeting and is retired as of June 30, 2014.

Mr. Schwarzenbach stated what a pleasure it has been to work with Mr. Rice, that he will be hard to be replaced and that there will be a meeting in the fall to present him with a plaque that the committee has been working to put together.

Mr. Schwarzenbach adjourned the meeting at 11:15am.

Respectfully Submitted by Heather Carey