



***Wild, Natural & Sustainable®***

SEAFOOD TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Wednesday, October 9, 2019

9:30 AM AKST

Captain Cook Hotel- Quadrant Room

Anchorage, Ak

**Call in number:** 800-315-6338 **Alternate call in number:** +1-913-904-9376 **Access Code:** 87904

*DRAFT MINUTES*

**I. Roll Call**

Chair Hart Schwarzenbach, Vice Chair Dan Block, Chris Sannito, Christina De-Witt, Tiffany Hanson, Jack Schultheis, Julie Decker, Joe Logan, Chip Treinen, Rodger Painter, Bruce Odegaard

Others Present

Robert Vidal (UniSea), Tracy Hare (Alaska General Seafoods, Bob Gerlach (ADEC), Paula Cullenburg (ARC), Jeremy Ayers, ADEC, Joshua Marickh (Icicle), Jason Brune (ADEC), Christian Hendrickson (AKOSH), Matthew Arnoldt (ASMI), Susan Marks, (ASMI), Michael Kohan (ASMI), John Burrows (ASMI), Becky Monagle (ASMI), Chris Barrows (PSPA) Cynthis Wallesz (harvester), Melanie Brown (Salmon State), Amy Kirkham (Office of Sen. Murkowski)

Hart takes a second to specifically call out the fine work done by ASMI technical director Michael Kohan.

**II. Approval of Agenda**

Rodger Painter moves to approve the draft agenda, with minor amendments. Proposed additions include the election of officers and discussion of committee recommendations. The motion is seconded by Julie and carries unanimously.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

Rodger moves to approve minutes, the motion is seconded by Dan and carries unanimously.

**IV. Public Comment**

Jeremy Woodrow, Executive Director of ASMI brings the presence of commissioner Jason Brune of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation to the attention of the committee.

**V. Introduction of Invited Members**

Michael acknowledges the presence of Dr. Bob Gerlack of Alaska DEC Fish Monitoring Program, Paula Cullenberg of the Alaska Research Consortium, and Christina Carpenter, and Jeremy Ayers.

## **VI. Good of the Order**

### **a. KSMSC**

Chris updates regarding the Kodiak Seafood and Marine Science Center (KSMSC) stating that over the last year the center has hosted a seaweed processor to produce frozen blanched seafood. A few summer interns were working on invasive species in Kodiak, specifically a problem with crayfish in river systems. The center has been helping small businesses across Alaska to create schedule processes for acidified foods. The center was close to hiring a full-time faculty member through the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and had narrowed it down to three finalists but this is likely to be put on hold due to the financial turmoil at the University. The position would have been a mariculture specialist, tenure-track position. However, two new researchers are coming on board to study the Gulf of Alaska food web. The center will also be hosting a University of Miami graduate student studying algal blooms. There are two fall workshops coming up; the first being the smoked Seafood School in Kodiak, followed by Alaska Seafood Processor Leadership Institute (ASPLI) in November. The center is also working with a large out-of-state canning client that has a problem with milky salmon. When these cans are opened It looks like somebody has poured milk inside of them. Julie adds that we may have some quality and handling guidelines for seaweed, and some prototypes for seaweed value-added products forthcoming.

### **b. Alaska Seafood Future Project- Paula Cullenberg**

The Alaska Research Consortium is focused on supporting the KSMSC and providing training to the Alaska Seafood industry. The Consortium is starting a project we are calling the Alaska Seafood Futures Project, focusing on training, education, and applied research needs for the seafood industry, sustaining the seafood industry in our state, and there are three questions guiding this mission:

- What kind of training needs are there in the seafood industry?
- Is there a way to engage the high schools in our state and enable our high school students to obtain better exposure to the seafood industry as a career?
- What are some of the applied research needs set the seafood industry has around the state?

The Consortium is hoping to work with a number of you and through interviews establish some possible answers to these questions by putting together a gap analysis. One of the things were particularly interested in is how can the industry be more involved in research, specifically avenues for accessing funding for research and this is being done strictly from a community industry perspective. The ARC is also sponsoring a Badder training session in Kodiak. This took a great deal of effort to set up and get him to Kodiak from Germany. He will be training six people from three companies for 40 hours.

## **VII. Old Business**

### **a. PCCRC Project-Dr. DeWitt**

Dr. DeWitt recalls her previous statements to the committee that this project is regarding nucleotides in Pollock, Yellowfin sole, and herring milt and roe. the initial plan had been to utilize a graduate student to have been recruited last summer who had developed a methodology. Much like the Kodiak KSMSC we are an off campus station and students must spend nine months on campus. The recruiting students developed a serious health problem in February, so instead of being able to progress with the project the way we were hoping we had to delay as treatments ran through most of the summer. but we are back on track and he is doing his extractions right now so everything is moving forward albeit a few months behind. we also got all the funding in place to start the other part of that project which is going to be looking at anti-inflammatory impacts of nucleotides as well as the peptides created through hydrolysis. So this will be looking a little bit more specifically at health benefits that one can tangibly derive from both roe and milt from these 3 different species. Student for this aspect has started on campus, and has access to both a lab on campus as well as one at our site in Astoria so they will be starting this aspect of the study very quickly.

For the first part of the study we were originally hoping to have most samples analyzed by December, but we will likely still be doing some analysis into January / February. The students' graduation is still occurring at the same time, but he will have much less time to actually write his thesis. Currently there is no preliminary information for what we are finding, because last summer was dedicated solely to method development, but there will be quite a bit of data available by December, especially due to abstract submission deadlines. Samples for the study are quite shelf-stable due to the storage availability at the -15 and -70 degree temperatures. Michael adds that the funding is from a grant, and so there is no funding required from the ASMI technical committee. ASMI has already done market analysis oh, and this is the research side of the project. ASMI Technical is hoping to roll it all into one finished product. grant funding is usually for 3 years, 2 years of funding with an option to extend without additional funding.

Dr. DeWitt adds that the reason we are looking at this is because we know that milk is high in nucleotide content and there's a previous study done by the University of Alaska at the Kodiak laboratory looking at nucleotide content of drum-dried product as well as aquaculture feeding studies. While the nucleotide content was high, they did not see the health benefits they were hoping for. however, because that study only looked at drum dried products, this study will aim to look at different processes of heating and drying the product to see if that changes the nucleotide content. We are also looking at anti-nutritional compounds which may form during the processing. our hypothesis is that the reason they didn't observe the benefits expected during the feeding studies maybe due to anti-nutritional compounds which may have developed during the drum-drying process. So we are looking to establish a method of processing which protects nucleotide content. the second part of the project will be to see what kind of nutritional claims / benefits can be tied to these products. Michael adds that PCCRC received no proposals for seafood this year, but that these grants fund for up to \$300,000 over three years and they would love to see more of these types

of projects, for future reference. dr. DeWitt also says that the chances of this project being presented at PFT are very high but that we really want is for it to be presented at IFT.

**b. Alaska salmon Omega 3 and Breast Cancer Survivors (SIRF/UConn) – Michael Kohan**

2 years ago we were approached by NFI and SIRF to collaborate on a project which we funded in the beginning for the first year in the amount of \$40,000 working with the University of Connecticut. 2nd year is being funded by NFI. The researcher has to graduate students working on projects associated with the larger project how to be able to gather key information on dietary fish consumption among breast cancer survivors and whether or not omega-3 fatty acids specifically DHA from Alaska wild salmon can increase dietary DHA levels among the survivors and reduce the levels of inflammatory mediators. ultimately the goal is to reduce the severity of persistent pain and fatigue. Currently the project is still in the data analysis stage and they processing right now. There are 150 participants, consuming Wild Alaska salmon through dietary plan to increase their DHA. The study will be submitted to the Journal of Cancer Survivorship, but the first manuscript having a submission goal of March 2020. Obviously the leverage provided by the study will be highly dependent on the results.

**c. Materials-Michael Kohan**

Both John and I work on a lot of the materials development at ASMI collaborating with many designers and specialists in a cost-effective way. A priority has been to update a suite of fact sheets which is rather dated which is currently ongoing. We are using ATP funding for it this year so none of it is coming out of the technical budget. We also received positive feedback for the salmon videos. This year we're going to be working on processing quality videos (not necessarily guidelines). it's been done in conjunction with Trident, UniSea, and Silver Bay among others and have been fortunate enough to have industry members allow us to come in and take video content to promote good quality processing for Alaska Seafood. this is something that can be used for B2B but we are hoping it is also something that could be taken by other ASMI programs and utilized for other audiences as well. Frozen quality is going to be another topic we address this year with communication aimed at both buyers and consumers. For utilization, we'd like to provide a look at how good quality processing is also important for utilizing products. We'd also like to provide custom content for industry members based on their needs. Roe quality will also be done this year. ASMI will produce the content but we'd like the technical committee to review it. the technical fact sheet series is essentially communicating science. it's about how to be able to do a B2B and if appropriate B2C communication on sticky topics. in the past year we've done hatcheries and chalky halibut, and we are looking to do parasites, mercury, and changing climate in the next wave. We will work with a Communications team on how to disseminate these properly. On nutrition resources, we will continue to work with the other programs at ASMI to build our nutrition resources. We have a registered dietitian who works with us and who is paid out of the technical budget for a minimal fee.

Chip adds that he sees a couple places where some editing could be done.

Michael adds that additional sections/pages could be added to the already complete Buyer's Guides based on the Board's preferences.

Joe Logan states that there will be some asks from the species committees on more technical fact sheets, such as jellied sablefish, how NOAA does federal fishery quotas, how ADFG handles fishery openings, sustainability, traceability. Michael adds that several of these are already in the docket. Sustainability in particular will be an additional White Paper, from which a brochure, fact sheet, etc. will be able to be developed.

## **VIII. New Business**

### **a. HACCP Update-Dr. Dewitt**

Christina went to Seafood National Alliance Meeting regarding HACCP update, and there have been changes made to several of the chapters and more change is coming. Training can still be done with current Hazards Guide but there may be a switch to a binder style due to the number of changes occurring. There is also discussion on the creation of a webinar for trainers to update them on the changes.

There are changes in the species chapter, and mistakes are present, and pollock may be one of them. They are going through for edits. It is acknowledged that the presence of different names for a single species is a challenge, wherein US is the only country recognizing *Gadus* nomenclature.

### **b. Pollock Nomenclature-Pat Shanahan**

In 2014 when the name change occurred there were some questions as to how this would affect tariff codes but the scientists likely didn't understand how they would be affecting international trade. An attempt was made to change the codes to acknowledge pollock as a *Gadus* species and the original advice from NIMS was to just hold until that happens. Unfortunately, that change, which would have gone into effect next year, was not supported by Russia, Norway, or Brazil so it didn't go through. The next time the issue will come up is 2025 with possible publishing in 2027. Current advice is for people working internationally to use *Theragra*.

### **c. ADEC AAC updates – Christina Carpenter and Jeremy Ayers**

Jeremy states that 21 CFR 110 has gone away, so 117 is now the new modern GMP of use. While his presentation is not an exhaustive list of changes, it is demonstrative of them. A lot of the Alaska-isms of the regulation has been eliminated to streamline/simplify for firms. Some big changes include:

- Education/training evidence
- Allergen cross-contact

- Human food byproducts for use in animals being subject to preventative controls even if operating under seafood HACCP
- Recall plans
- Cross-sampling eliminated in favor of 12 sample submission from first lot
- Inspection scores are gone and inspections will not be left at firm, but reviewed and signed electronically in real-time before being pushed out
- Recognition program is gone.

He states that they are also looking to establish anti-listeria best practices for RTE products, using NFI documents as a starting point.

**d. ADEC/ASMI AK seafood contaminant/nutrient database – Michael Kohan and Dr. Gerlach**

Dr. Gerlach states that the fish monitoring program begun in 2001 has been a collaborative effort to keep costs down, but that has created some issues, namely that sampling of fish has been opportunistic and takes a few years before we get sampling representative of the State other than halibut, due to collaboration with IPHC who has been sampling. While the effort has been on contaminants, we are shifting to focus more on biomarkers as a more accurate representation of exposure in the population. Figures we have put lower-48 population as eating ~14 lbs. of fish per person per year, while in AK it can be between 200-400 lbs. per person. Using a hair monitoring program, it was found that the remote subsistence populations (which are in those high figures) actually often had lower hair-mercury content than those in the lower-48, or just a small amount higher. This is because fish is not just the contaminants, there are many compounds such as selenium, free fatty acids. UAF was doing stable isotope analysis, to determine trophic level consumption. Due to all this, the proposal Michael has created is very important, as a lot of the data used is not representative of Alaska fish.

**ADEC Commissioner Brune**

DEC met w/ PSPA a couple weeks ago. Funding had been coming from Ocean Ranger, but Brune is moving it to the General Fund. Brune is hoping to develop a process that is not reliant on opportunistic sampling, but rather an established methodology, which may result in a bigger program long term. Additional information will be available from PSPA Nov. 1. Due to Alaska's high percentage of the US seafood volume and the constant questions around Fukushima radiation, heavy metals, PFASs, this tool would be invaluable. Current funding is \$314k USD which includes Dr. Gerlach's payments and lab staff for heavy metals, with a sub-portion of samples being sent to third-party facility more robust testing.

It is requested that ahead of 20-21 budget, where we are requesting a shift to General Funds, that we may call on Technical Committee for support and testifying on behalf of this action. Industry collaboration on methodology and funding assistance are both appreciated, and industry present states that they are more than willing.

## **Michael on Proposal**

Michael provides a brief aside saying the Fukushima radiation currently being done is of paramount importance for messaging. Moving on, it is stated that the proposal is for review. A species list (meant to be comprehensive) and costs are provided. Microplastics in particular is quite expensive and is not included in total costs, but was included as an idea of how much that will cost if its a big need. ASMI Technical cannot handle the costs but maybe funding can be discussed at the Board level for possible ATP allocation. Currently, ASMI material features USDA official data, which is formed from market-basket approach sampling. No emphasis on region, quality, CoC etc. is present. It has been a request for years that an Alaska specific nutrition and contaminant database be made available, and this represents a proactive way to do that. We need the Board to understand the various needs this data creation would have, as well as the funding required. Currently there are no other action plans, but we'd like to hear ideas from the Committee as well as any Board Members. Julie asks about sampling frequency, and Michael says that though it would have to be seasonal, the sampling needs to be done at predetermined and regular intervals based on an established methodology (every 5, 10 years, for example). Gerlach says that cost spreading would dictate you do a 10ish species per year for 3 years, then wait and repeat/compare after chosen amount of time has elapsed. Each result needs to be archived for reference based on emergent needs. Some methodology on sampling protocols, locations, regions, etc. are included. Regions of choice to matter, as evidenced by IPHC's reluctance on regional repping due to Alaska's mercury content in halibut being lower.

## **Motion**

Julie makes a motion that the Committee recommends to the ASMI Board that the Technical Program Director works to develop a methodology, associated budget, and potential funding for review at the next meeting. Jack seconds and the motion carries unanimously.

### **e. USDA Nutrition Data**

Michael adds that the USDA is also now splitting records on nutrition information being split into legacy and standard reference as a way to bolster their new Foundational Foods program. The legacies are now retired and will not take more sampling, and these are still used sometimes for calculated labels. Foundation foods is being pitched to us as a way to be more region-specific in our data. They want to be able to isolate by region. John and I met w/them and there are a lot of benefits such as Alaska nomenclature. But, because they desire location information, either a region or a latitude/longitude of harvest, which is a potential issue since we often deal with regionalization issues. We are seeking the committee's opinion on whether we want to do this, it will be added regardless since we paid for the sampling, but it's a matter of whether we approve and endorse it or we'd rather generate our own nutrient database. Samples for some salmon species were provided previously before Michael's tenure, so we are following through on those for good faith, but we need to decide what we want going forward. This offer is largely due to their failure to perform their part in including an Alaska-specific reference in their standard data. Christina recommends running the data with rounding rules used, to see if there's any difference.

The Committee recommends checking the differences with rounding rules implemented and checking back with the committee.

**f. Seafood Safety Monitoring update and discussion – Joe Logan**

Joe states that parasites are unequivocally not a safety issue in Alaska Seafood, it still comes up as a quality issue. Regulation differences exist between domestic and EU shipped products, such as in the US the number of parasites is largely a grading issue, wherein in EU its around 1 parasite per lb. is allowed. Currently, efforts are underway to start integrating parasite QA data into a database. In general, parasites are more present in vac-pac items, in which parasites that are normally not visible often migrate to the outer walls of the fillet. On average, there is at least one parasite in a fillet. A lot of circulating misinformation is suggesting fish are ‘sitting’ too long and parasites migrated into fillet meat from belly cavity. While some general discussion on the issue continues, it is emphasized that this is not a safety concern, and the disgust issue is a separate concern to be addressed.

**g. RFM CoC/Logo update- John Burrows**

RFM has rolled out new logos, and these have been submitted for trademarking in multiple markets, some of which have been localized. A new brandmark guide and terms of use agreement has been created and issued to Chain of Custody holders.

We’ve submitted in three classes: 5, 29 and 35 in the EU/UK (only)

- Class 35 : advertising/marketing material
- Class 5: supplements (among other things)
- Class 29: (fish, meat, etc.)

First phase submissions are complete, and are being tracked. With these submissions, we are mostly safe to use the logos in these markets, with some concerns existing w/China (IP’s there not well protected.) It is between a 6-15 month process for certification, but we have already published in UK/EU. This phase included the US, China, Hong Kong, Japan, The EU (English only) the UK, and Brazil (delayed). Local language versions are being created for Japan and Hong Kong. English versions were also registered in these countries.

In the EU, only English has been submitted, as this makes submitting translations in specific EU nations an easy process. UK was included separately as a measure of Brexit protection.

China has many peculiarities and will be the biggest headache, for example, text in logos are problematic if not identifying names, so we had to create separate textless versions there.

Brazil is delayed as they are currently streamlining their process to take 1 year instead of the current 5 years. Phase II will be localizations of EU countries with a priority on Romance language countries.

Regarding the CoC, an MoU was signed with Iceland after several meetings for formation of a joint RFM under one umbrella. The Chain of Custody presented an easy way to begin moving forward with this process due to their heavily borrowing from ours initially. We created a standard

comparison document, which the Icelanders used it to create a draft of a joint CoC, featuring more of our clauses than theirs (partly due to their adoption of our multi-site).

SAI global is to be hired to examine the joint CoC from a standpoint of accreditation, which could take a few months to a year but we'll be able to issue unaccredited certs in the meantime.

Norway wished to adopt our joint standard, and will eventually be used as the guinea pig for a joint version of Alaska/Iceland fisheries standard since they will pull from both. Denmark has also very recently expressed interest in joining with us. This means that RFM may be asking Technical to spend some time with this joint CoC.

#### **h. OSU/ASMI Chef Sensory on Frozen Quality**

Majority of this is through Domestic committee. We will be attempting to create a different perception of frozen quality, showing the value of frozen product by having chefs performing sensory analysis of cooked frozen product. We would love to host it at Portland at FIC, the hard part is getting chefs to come, so we will have to come to them. We will tie it into existing events (Barton Seaver, James Beard). We are looking into forums for this now, and again this is mostly a domestic program action.

#### **i. Consistent roe grading/outreach material development – Michael**

We are wanting to establish better Roe materials. Most of what is used is now outdated. Industry is requesting better quality/handling guidelines. We will use ATP to create videos (similar to salmon quality vids) and while we'll avoid roe grading, we want to build a new roe brochure and other assets which will include nutrition data and would include all roe products and types.

#### **j. Events**

##### **i. Nutrition FAM Trip 2020**

Place-based education opportunity to collaborate w/SNP to bring in nutrition minded individuals such as dietitians, nutritionists and other advocates to Alaska and provide a focus on nutritional benefits, sustainability, etc. We're working w/ domestic (no cost to Tech). Timing will be dependent on fisheries we want to see. Locations/logistics will depend on several variables but it will likely be 6-8 days. We'd like to develop a strategy for broadcasting these messages, and the tentative plan is for next summer. Planning will begin in November.

##### **ii. Specialty Products Fam trip July/August 2020**

This would be a focus on alternative products, and may be ATP funded but maybe not. We are interested in sharing pet food, collagen, and more stories with buyers. We are looking for ASMI buy-in and Industry interest. This sector has no connection to the source, so we'd like to create that, but currently this is a bit of a pilot project.

## **IX. Strategic Mission:**

Goals being revisited due to having a couple years since RFM went out and with new committee members. We want to establish this program as the lead technical source, and that we have a status that justifies funding at a certain level. The program used to be very well-funded, but certification diluted us. Reduced from 900k to 300k by the time Michael got here, and is now barely a 355k program but with asks from other ASMI committees and programs that require a far larger budget...leaving about 90k for actual use between Michael and John. We are asking to evaluate the goals and give feedback on what we should be focusing on and what/if anything should be removed. Julie adds that it's the only committee present by mandate in by-laws, speaking to its importance. Hart adds that we've been very effective and caught up on almost everything, but we don't want to be complacent and be reactive, but rather to steer the direction of our messaging, focusing on quality and safety. Requests tend to be ones that would consume

Need to maintain what we've done but be proactive and make choices to guide staff. Michael adds that this is a great opportunity to establish who our real audience is and to communicate that not only are we here to support the rest of the ASMI programs, but we also are the only program here to serve industry. Julie adds that the contaminant testing issue makes an excellent case for requesting a raised budget. Michael clarifies that the State may need to be the primary resource on this, as industry funding being the majority would appear self-serving. A trade organization may be useful here ahead of FY21 Budget for them State to make the case that the State prioritizes technical funding and these databases as matters of public health. The importance of these types of databases being from a competent authority with no bias is paramount. Additional conversation ensues regarding the proper framing and couching of the nutrition/contaminant databases as well as funding of the program. Ultimately, it is decided that more pressing asks to the ASMI Board for funding are needed. A work plan for three years may be useful in demonstrating the need to the Board.

## **X. Species Committee Questions**

### **a. Halibut/Sablefish Comm**

- i. Requesting chalky halibut outreach
  1. Nearly complete, in final review process now.
- ii. Jellied Sablefish outreach
  1. New fact sheet forthcoming
- iii. Sablefish parasite outreach or fact sheet
  1. We'll provide a 1-pager on this issue, basically sablefish fact sheet with a disclaimer on parasites.
  2. General parasite fact sheet
  3. This ask is actually from buyers, we'll run it by OMR's to minimize risk of sheet being held against us

### **b. Salmon Committee**

- i. Preseason education for fishermen

1. Michael has offered to go and educate
- ii. Finding better ways to distribute our quality materials to the fleet.
  1. Collaborate w/comms to find best messaging
- iii. Climate change and impact on salmon industry
  1. We are building a fact sheet for general climate impacts, and using sustainability language to avoid doom and gloom and highlight what is being done. Adaptability and sustainability as the take-home message. A white paper on sustainability will also be part of this messaging.
- iv. Plant-based diets as a benefit
  1. Already done, white paper and one-pager exist on nutritional benefit synergies of having seafood and plants together.

**c. Shellfish Comm**

- i. Live shipping fact sheets
- ii. Species fact sheets for king crab, 2-3 sheets (red, golden)

**d. Whitefish Comm**

- i. Parasite outreach
  1. Will be covered as part of general parasite fact sheet

**XI. Questions for Board**

Discussion ensues for answers to questions by the Board, which are to be presented tomorrow at the Board meeting.

**XII. Adjournment**

Due to loss of quorum during lunch, no votes on chair and vice chair at this time.  
Motion by Hart to adjourn.