

April 10, 2015

TO: ASMI Board of Director's & Committee Members

FROM: Claudia Hogue, Foodservice Director

RE: Foodservice Program Update

This report is a recap of the foodservice program activities from July 1, 2014 – March 2015. In addition to the foodservice program, staff is responsible for co-managing the consumer public relations (Edelman) and advertising programs.

**FOODSERVICE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:**

- Generate increased foodservice awareness and usage via Alaska seafood brand-oriented marketing programs.
- Achieve differentiation between wild Alaska, farmed seafood (including specialty farms) and other seafood sources and proteins.
- Maintain the highest-value perception in targeted foodservice segments.

**FOODSERVICE STRATEGIES:**

- Build awareness among foodservice operators and their patrons for Alaska seafood's unique features: Alaska, Wild, Sustainable, Pure, and Flavor/Texture.
- Position Alaska seafood as a healthy alternative to other proteins.
- Expand usage and menu branding of wild Alaska seafood (including value-added products) with target operator and distributor accounts
- Build on established leadership position for ASMI in the areas of seafood education, training and menu development.
- Develop partnership position for ASMI in providing consumer-oriented marketing programs.
- Maximize Alaska seafood's position and penetration with high-volume broadline and seafood specialty distributors.
- Heighten Alaska seafood industry awareness and involvement in the foodservice program and continue to educate so that the industry can meet the needs of the marketplace.

**OPERATOR PROMOTIONS:**

National account promotions have been very effective in expanding the usage and menu branding of Alaska seafood with target operator accounts. Working with key decision makers within these accounts, ASMI develops customized promotional programs that may include the

following components: merchandising materials, menu branding allowances, advertising, research, waitstaff incentives, training seminars, website and email, etc. In addition, ASMI also has a number of themed, species-specific promotional materials that are available to all foodservice operators year-round. These include posters, table tents, menu sheets, waitstaff tip cards, buttons, etc. ASMI also has materials designed especially for kids.

There continues to be a strong interest in promoting seafood from Alaska and most of these promotions are backed with significant financial support from the chains themselves. **The following national operator accounts are partnering with ASMI this fiscal year to promote the Alaska brand and logo with customized point-of-sale materials, menus and consumer advertising.**

- **AM/PM** – Alaska pollock
- **Bud's Chicken and Seafood** – Alaska cod
- **Captain D's** – Alaska salmon
- **Denny's Restaurants** – Alaska salmon
- **Disney** – All species
- **Dine Around Seattle** – All species
- **Fish City Grill/Half Shells** – Alaska salmon, halibut & snow Crab
- **HuHot** – Alaska salmon & pollock
- **Jack in the Box** – Alaska pollock
- **Joey's Restaurants (Canada)** – Alaska pollock
- **KFC Hawaii** – Alaska pollock
- **The Krystal Company** – Alaska pollock
- **Landry's Oceanaire** – Alaska king crab, salmon & halibut
- **Landry's McCormick & Schmick's** – Alaska salmon & halibut
- **Macy's Department Stores** – Alaska halibut, salmon, cod & crab
- **Market Broiler Restaurants** – Alaska cod, snow crab & halibut
- **N.Y. Yankees/Legends Hospitality** – All species
- **Ocean Prime** – Alaska king crab, halibut & salmon
- **Princess Cruise Lines** – All species
- **Red Lobster** – Alaska salmon & crab
- **Rockfish Seafood Grill** – Alaska salmon, pollock & sole
- **Rubio's** – Alaska pollock
- **Salad Creations** – Alaska salmon
- **Season's 52 (Darden)** – Alaska halibut & salmon
- **Shari's Restaurants** – Alaska cod & salmon
- **Sharky's Woodfired Mexican Grill** – Alaska salmon & cod

- **Showmar's Restaurants** – Alaska pollock & sole
- **Smokey Bones Bar & Fire Grill** – Alaska cod
- **Sodexo** – Alaska pollock (K-12)
- **Sonic Drive-In** – Alaska pollock
- **Stillwater Grill** – Alaska salmon, halibut & sole
- **The Fresh Fish Co.** – All species
- **White Castle** – Alaska pollock

#### **Colleges & Universities:**

- **Skidmore** – Alaska king crab
- **Stanford University** – All species
- **University of Massachusetts Amherst** – All species
- **University of North Dakota** – All species
- **Yale** – All species
- **University of Arizona** – All species
- **University of Montana** – All species

**Disney Chef Training Seminars:** ASMI partnered with Disney to conduct 2 days of chef training seminars about “Seafood: The Intersection of Wellness and Sustainability.” The lively demonstrations were attended by about 120 executive chefs from all the various dining venues (from take away kiosks to fine dining at Disney Hotels) at both Disneyland, Anaheim (8/26/14) and Disneyworld, Orlando (9/11/14). At Disney headquarters, ASMI made presentations about what sustainable seafood means--highlighting Alaska fisheries practices, demonstrated “local” through a discussion about Alaska fishing families, and presented a summary of seafood items and promotions at leading restaurants across the US and chains’ approach to sustainable seafood.

Chef Ben Pollinger (ASMI’s Chef Alliance and Executive Chef at Oceana Restaurant, NYC) presented a guided tasting of the 5 species of salmon and demonstrated menu ideas for Alaska seafood at quick service, casual and fine dining. Chef Pollinger started with *Alaska Salmon Spread with Crostini* and *Salmon Cake BLT Sliders*, spoke about freezing, “underutilized parts”, smaller portion sizes and smaller bites of seafood paired with healthy ingredients like: *Seared Rockfish with Fresh Corn Risotto And Seared Black Cod with White Beans and Roasted Peppers*.

From our partner at Disney, Gary Jones: “The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive from everyone I’ve spoken with. The pace of the sessions, the food, and the opportunity to interact with each of you from the morning through the reception have all received great reviews. This is a tough audience to please on a good day but you all hit the mark.”

## **K-12 Education & Promotions:**

**Sodexo K-12:** ASMI continues to work in partnership with the Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers (GAPP) and Sodexo's K-12 management division to increase fish on school menus. After completing a successful test in 2013 among elementary, middle and high schools in Gig Harbor, WA, ASMI moved forward to develop a training video and a printed manager's guide for school foodservice professionals.

This fall, a national Alaska pollock school promotion will take place with Sodexo. In preparation, ASMI conducted two webinars for district managers about how Alaska pollock fits into school lunch menus. The webinar focused on Alaska pollock key points of difference – affordable, healthy, sustainable, kids like it, all American and marketing support for the promotion. Promotion components are posted on the Sodexo Intranet and include:

- A custom program manager's guide was developed with 12 easy to prepare recipes.
- Three videos were created – About Alaska pollock fishery, Alaska pollock Preparation and Handling, and How to Mix and Match recipes for a delicious school lunch.
- Merchandising materials – poster, static cling, bookmarks, tattoos
- Eblast reminders to district managers for ordering once-frozen Alaska pollock and merchandising materials
- Parent newsletter article focusing on eating healthy with Alaska pollock

**Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD):** LAUSD serves over 650,000 meals a day through elementary, middle and high schools—one of our nation's largest school districts. After meeting the Director and Vice Director of foodservice at the CIA Healthy Flavors, Healthy Kids Summit in May, ASMI representatives made a presentation at the LAUSD offices about "How to Get Kids to Eat More Fish and Seafood". Next steps include developing several new Alaska Pollock menu items and test marketing to ensure success. Both ASMI and GAPP will partner with LAUSD to help menu development, marketing and training for LA school foodservice professionals.

## **DISTRIBUTOR PROMOTIONS:**

Distributors are a critical link in the foodservice sales path because they sell to chain accounts, foodservice management companies and independent operators on a daily basis. The distributor exerts a high degree of influence over operators in their purchasing decisions. While independent and seafood specialty distributors play a vital role in supplying fresh products to

certain segments of the industry, broadline distributors are an important force, especially in terms of frozen seafood products and their penetration of all foodservice segments. In addition, broadline distributors are also putting increased focus on fresh seafood sales.

Historically, ASMI broadline distributor promotions have been heavily involved with individual operating companies and divisions. Within the past few years, the landscape has shifted towards a corporate controlled environment also known as Category Management. Category Management now controls the entire process from purchasing, brand development, quality control and marketing (training and promotional activities at the division level). ASMI has a unique opportunity to partner with top broadline distributors at the corporate level to facilitate the growth of the Alaska seafood brand and build sales.

**The following distributors are partnering with ASMI during FY14 on all-species sales incentive and brand awareness promotions:**

- **Cash – Wa Distributing**
- **Del Monte Meat Co.**
- **Martin Brothers Distributing**
- **Foodservices of America Corporate**
- **Foodservices of America Western Washington**
- **Gordon Foodservice Corporate – U.S.**
- **Reinhart Foodservice Corporate**
- **Samuel & Son Seafood Co.**
- **Sysco Corporate – U.S.**
- **Sysco Corporate – Canada**
- **US Foods Corporate**

**Sysco Corporate Sockeye Promotion:** Sysco Corporate promoted once-frozen Alaska sockeye salmon nationwide through all 71 Operating Company's (OpCo's) during the Lenten season. The promotion began on February 1<sup>st</sup> and ran through April 4, 2015. This promotion was part of a larger all-species Alaska seafood initiative; however, special emphasis was placed on sockeye salmon as outlined below.

**Promotional Components:**

- Qualifying items included only *Portico Simply* single-frozen Alaska sockeye salmon fillets and portions. This ensures that only Alaska sockeye salmon is part of the promotion.
- Customer Coupon Incentive Program: Specially developed Alaska sockeye salmon coupons were distributed nationwide. Customers that purchased a minimum of 5 cases

of Alaska sockeye salmon will receive a fifty dollar credit. This program offers the opportunity to gain new customers and convert existing ones.

- The promotional period is effective February 1, 2015 – April 4, 2015.
- Operating Company Incentive Program: Sales incentives will also be provided to Sysco. The top OpCo in each region (8 regions total) will receive \$5,000. The winning OpCo's will be determined by growth in case sales and equalized for the differences in company size. Payout will go directly to the OpCo president and dispersed to sales representatives. Additional Alaska seafood sales will also qualify towards total case sales.

#### **Communication Plan:**

- Sysco also developed a number of communication vehicles directed at Sysco management, sales representatives and customers. These include email blasts, webcasts, separate flyers, PowerPoint templates and training materials. All materials and communications included the ASMI logo.
- A separate Alaska sockeye salmon flyer has been developed which includes a statement about Alaska's RFM certification program.

#### **Metrics & Reporting:**

- GAP analysis reports will be provided to OpCo's to help target customers and identify sales opportunities.
- During the promotion, weekly tracking will be tabulated on all promo cases sold.
- At the end of the promo, the quantity of new cases sold will be calculated to determine the winning OpCo's.
- Following the promo and total campaign timeframe, sales will be tracked to highlight pre-promo, promo and post-promo results that will trail for six months.

#### **TRADE SHOWS & CONFERENCES:**

**National Association of College & University Foodservice (NACUFS):** ASMI participated as a platinum sponsor at the NACUFS conference in Baltimore from July 9-12. Over 1,500 food and beverage decision makers attend this conference from colleges and universities around the country. ASMI's distributed literature and sampled Alaska sockeye salmon prepared by ASMI Chef Congress member Dan Enos from the Oceanaire Seafood Room in Boston.

#### ***Sip for the Sea – A Tasting of Sustainable Wine and Food to Benefit the NY Aquarium:***

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) hosted *Sip for the Sea* benefit at the Central Park Zoo on Thursday, September 18, 2014. Guests sampled pairings of sustainable wines with sustainable seafood from some of New York and Brooklyn's top restaurants. ASMI donated product to the following restaurants:

- Esca
- Almond
- Sheraton Times Square
- Stanton Social
- The Wayfarer
- Tavern on the Green
- Clement at The Peninsula
- Tolani
- Gordon Ramsey

**Les Dames d 'Escoffier National Conference (LDEI):** ASMI sponsored and attended the LDEI national conference in Boston, from October 29-31. LDEI is the premier organization of influential professional women who are committed to the advancement of education and philanthropy in food, beverage and hospitality. With 26 chapters around the country, LDEI represents the most influential women in the food industry.

At the conference, staff networked and sampled various Alaska seafood species in a variety of menu applications. ASMI staff also participated as a keynote speaker on the panel "*Sourcing Sustainable Seafood*" which was very well received.

**National Restaurant Association/Marketing Executives Group (MEG):** ASMI is a sponsor of both the fall and spring MEG meetings which target marketing directors from the top national and regional chains in the U.S. MEG has become a regular event for ASMI and a number of promotions have resulted from association with this group over the years.

**International Corporate Chefs Association (ICCA):** The ICCA is the only chefs association designed exclusively for corporate chefs from the nation's largest chains and multi-unit operations. As one of the founding sponsors, ASMI has the opportunity to network, educate and develop relationships with key corporate executive chefs throughout the year at a number of ICCA events.

**Global Chefs Innovators Association (GCIA):** This new organization focuses on individuals involved with R&D, marketing and purchasing at smaller chains. As a founding sponsor, ASMI can build long-term relationships with top research and development chefs at foodservice chains 200-400 in sales rank through a variety of educational and networking events throughout the U.S.

**Culinary Institute of America (CIA)/Worlds of Healthy Flavors Conference:** With continued emphasis on health, ASMI sponsored the World of Healthy Flavors Conference in January which brings together leading experts from Harvard University in nutrition research. The goal of this retreat is to assist corporate chefs and senior managers from top national accounts in expanding options for healthy meal choices. As a key sponsor, ASMI is in a unique position to help educate chefs on how they can incorporate Alaska seafood onto the menus of America's top chains. Alaska seafood was featured in multiple demos and menu planning activities for attendees to work with.

**Seafood Expo North America:** ASMI participated again this year in the Seafood Expo North America. This year, ASMI introduced a new booth which focused on the variety and delicious flavors of Alaska seafood. Large format food photography was the backdrop for showcasing mouth-watering plate shots from ASMI's recipe collections. This is a shared project with the retail, technical and international programs.

**College & University Special Events:** ASMI continues to partner with individual schools to promote sustainable Alaska seafood. Special events are a great way to create "teachable moments" for students and staff and create excitement on campus. Over the past few months a number of promotions have taken place on campuses around the country. For many students, college is their first opportunity to develop life-long eating habits and these types of events are a great way to create new Alaska seafood consumers.

#### **TRADE EDUCATION:**

**Alaska Seafood Bar Bites and Cocktail Pairings:** ASMI foodservice partnered with celebrity chef and mixologist Kathy Casey to create 10 new appetizer/bar bite recipes with paired cocktails. The wine food pairing-pairing concept has evolved to include craft beers and cocktails and food pairings primarily because mixology has grown over the past five years and many restaurants are using signature cocktails and happy hours to increase profits. Cocktails are no longer just for before the meal or an after dinner drink.

The Recipes Include:

- "California Roll" Deviled Eggs with a Cucumber Saki Martini
- Alaska Salmon Sliders with Rosemary Lemon Aioli and Pickled Onions with a Tuscan Meyer Lemon Collins
- Citrusy Alaska Spot Prawns with and IPA Grapefruit Twist
- Alaska Cod Brandade with Warm Citrus Olives and a Clementine 007 (variation on a Vesper)
- Thai Fish Cakes with Sriracha Chili Dipping Sauce and a Fragrant Thai Mojito
- Corn and Surimi Fritters with Verde Avocado Salsa with a Chili Cilantro Margarita

- Alaska Cod Tostada Bites with Pineapple Bacon Jam with Pineapple Cha Cha Sangria
- Banh Mi Alaska Black Cod Sliders with an Elderflower French 75
- Pickled Alaska Salmon with Red Onions and Beets in a Jar with a Scandi Martini
- Alaska Salmon Charcuterie with a Bourbon Peach Old Fashioned

**Swap Meat Recipe Contest:** ASMI foodservice has launched a *Swap Meat* Recipe Contest in support of healthier menus across the country. The contest calls for professional foodservice chefs to replace beef, pork, lamb and poultry with wild, healthy and sustainable Alaska seafood. Chefs have three months to create, test and submit their best *Swap Meat* recipes for the chance to win up to \$2,500.

New USDA Dietary Guidelines recommend that Americans consume at least 26 pounds of seafood annually, but the average consumer ate only 14.5 in 2013. In addition, 67% of it was consumed outside the home. This is an opportunity for chefs to menu even more seafood as consumers already look to them for this tasty protein.

The most environmentally friendly of all animal proteins, seafood, specifically wild-caught, has a low impact on the environment in comparison with beef, pork lamb or poultry. Through the *Swap Meat* Recipe Contest, chefs can bring classic, meat-based favorites to life with a sustainable twist – Alaska seafood as the protein. For example, chicken picatta becomes Alaska cod picatta, beef sliders become Alaska salmon sliders, chicken kabobs become pistachio-crusted Alaska halibut kabobs and chicken tortilla soup becomes Alaska Snow Crab tortilla soup.

*Swap Meat* recipes can be submitted through June 30, 2015. To enter, professional foodservice chefs simply identify a traditional meat dish that is already on their menu, or develop an original recipe, and swap out the protein with one of Alaska’s many species of seafood.

Each submission will be evaluated based on creativity, accuracy/methodology and applicability on restaurant menus. Winning dishes will be selected based on flavor, creativity/originality and visual appeal. The top three will be announced in July. First place will receive \$2,500, second place is \$1,000 and third is \$500. All winners will be featured on the ASMI website, in public relations efforts and on ASMI’s social media channels.

**CIA/Pro Chef:** The Culinary Institute of America (CIA) offers a media educational venue through their on-line site, *ProChef.com* and ASMI has partnered with them to create an ASMI micro-site. This custom program includes streaming videos, interactive web pages, photography and informative text highlighting Alaska seafood. Recently, a social media component has also been added to increase traffic to the site and encourage dialogue about Alaska seafood. The goal is to better educate the foodservice community about Alaska seafood and its use in today’s menu applications suitable for a range of foodservice operations and segments. The Culinary Institute of America is the largest and most prestigious culinary school in the U.S.

## **ADVERTISING:**

The foodservice program continues to advertise in a variety of foodservice trade publications. Consumer research confirms that taste is the leading driver of increased seafood consumption at restaurants. ASMI developed a new campaign that positions Alaska seafood as the place for great tasting, craveable seafood with beautiful food photography. There are also three versions of the ad with interchangeable plate shoots for salmon, whitefish and crab. In addition, we recently placed ads to promote ASMI's *Swap Meat* recipe contest which has gained tremendous momentum. Ads have been running in the following print and online foodservice trade publications this fiscal year:

- ***Nation's Restaurant News***
- ***Food Arts***
- ***Plate Magazine***
- ***QSR (Quick Service Restaurants)***
- ***Food Management***
- ***Flavor & The Menu***
- ***Santé Magazine***
- ***On Campus Hospitality***
- ***CIA- Pro Chef***
- ***Restaurant Business***
- ***Catersource Magazine***

## **FOODSERVICE PUBLIC RELATIONS:**

Foodservice public relations is targeted to the foodservice trade which includes chefs, distributors, marketing and purchasing executives, culinary schools and anyone associated with the foodservice business. These activities include editorials, product releases and news articles in foodservice publications, as well as special events that promote Alaska seafood to operators and influential food editors. Since September, ASMI has been working with the Revelry Agency to provide foodservice PR coverage.

**International Foodservice Editors Conference (IFEC):** In October, ASMI participated in the annual IFEC conference in Dallas, TX. IFEC provides a face-to-face forum for ASMI to pitch story ideas to foodservice editors and communication professionals. Over 250 individuals are involved in this organization and offer ASMI a great opportunity to network and educate participants about Alaska seafood.

ASMI hosted the *Betty Luncheon*, which each year honors a member of IFEC for their contributions to the organization. Alaska King Crab was served with a number of dipping sauces. With butcher paper on the tables, crab crackers, branded Alaska seafood buckets for shells and bibs for our guests; it was a true crab feast.

**International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP):** ASMI Foodservice was a Bronze level sponsor at this year's international convention held in Washington, DC. IACP is a worldwide forum for the development and exchange of information, knowledge and inspiration within the professional food and beverage community. This year ASMI served Alaska pollock a la Plancha at the 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday party for celebrity chef Jacques Pepin. During the networking luncheon Alaska snow crab claws and oysters were served.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks!