

Halibut Sablefish Answers

1. What concerns or marketing needs, specific to your species, would you like ASMI Operational Committees to discuss and/or address? Are there areas of need with which ASMI can assist?

Yes, the Domestic Marketing Committee can help us maintain our diminishing market share on the East Coast, where we are up against a growing supply of fresh Atlantic halibut. We encourage the Domestic Program to continue to emphasize Alaska halibut when promoting Pacific halibut, especially for fresh sales. Two distinct benefits Alaska halibut has over Atlantic halibut are: a. Sustainability, achieved in part by closing the season during halibut's spawning period from November to March, while the Canadian fishery is year round. b. Pacific halibut has also never been overfished in the IPHC's 94 years of management, while Canadian halibut is recovering from two separate periods of overfishing in the last 50 years.

2. What have been the impacts (so far) of the U.S./China trade dispute and subsequent tariffs on your species groups? Have there been shifts (product form, processing location, new markets) that ASMI should be aware of? Are there opportunities you would like to see explored by Operational Committees/Programs? Pacific halibut and sablefish have not been heavily impacted by the tariffs so far.

3. Do you have any overall industry concerns that should be brought to the Committee Chairs meeting for them to discuss and carry forward to the ASMI Board of Directors?

Yes, we would like to ask the Technical Committee to explore ways to educate the supply chain, working with them (i.e. Whole Foods and others) to The halibut Sablefish Committee was asked if we preferred help from the Technical committee on two broad areas: 1) addressing perception of chalk among members of the supply chain and 2) working on technical ways to reduce the incidence of chalk. Our priority would be to focus on the former, addressing perception issues among distributors and industry buyers, including education about chalk in halibut and ways to use the product with varying degrees of chalk. We also recognizes the opportunity for the Technical Committee and ASMI staff to work with Whole Foods and others in this matter. We support ASMI working

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with the International Pacific Halibut Committee on a project they are launching this spring involving survey the processors up and down the coast to get a better idea of incidents of chalk. Finally, we would like the communications Committee to be aware of the competition our product is facing from Atlantic and now Russian halibut to our entire U.S. market. The Russian halibut will likely be MSC certified later this year or early next.

4. What trends or opportunities can you identify that ASMI Programs can capitalize on?

Social media, as the programs already have. Specifically, the technical videos showing quality handling practices and perhaps preventative chalky halibut practices, for longline and pot-caught halibut would be good for social media