

**DATE: May 9, 2024**  
**TO: ASMI Board of Directors**  
**FROM: Nicole Alba, International Marketing Director**  
**RE: International Program Report**

The budget for the international program in FY25 has not yet been confirmed. The Regional Agricultural Promotion Program (RAPP) award announcement is expected in late May, which will replace the ATP program scheduled to expire at the end of the fiscal year. In FY25, the international program received \$4,696,365 in Market Access Program (MAP) funding and \$3,300,000 in matching funds. The amount of funding that RAPP will provide is yet to be determined.

**The proposed International Program budget is based on a confirmed MAP award of 4,696,365, SDPR funding of \$3,300,000, and an estimated \$4,000,000 in RAPP funds.**

ASMI applied for RAPP funding in January 2024 and submitted a broad-reaching proposal focused on diversifying and improving overseas markets for Alaska seafood in the near and long term. The proposal includes growing marketing programs in Southeast Asia and Latin America by adding consumer programs, following EMP success in MENAWA with a trade program, exploring the potential in India, and diversifying marketing efforts and target audiences in the UK, Japan, and Eastern Europe. With RAPP funding, MAP funds can be redirected to RAPP-ineligible programs, such as the European Union (CEU, WEU, and SEU).

In February, ASMI International hosted a fruitful trade mission to Thailand with 12 industry members attending, garnering projected 12-month sales of over \$14 million to the region. ASMI International and seven exporters were first-time exhibitors at the Gulfood Tradeshow in Dubai, generating over 3.5 million in projected 12-month sales and garnering over 100 trade leads.

In March, the international team arranged two inbound missions to Dutch Harbor, including buyers from Latin America and representatives from Sainsbury's. Inbound and familiarization missions from Europe, Poland, and Japan are planned for summer 2024, as is a culinary retreat in Homer in early June, which will welcome chefs from every international program.

April was busy arranging the Seafood Expo Global tradeshow for ASMI. This year, ASMI had a record number of co-exhibitors participating. During the Semana Salvaje restaurant week arranged by ASMI, numerous Barcelona restaurants participated and offered a variety of Alaska seafood to the industry and their customers.

The international program submitted the following success stories to FAS in May 2024. In addition to quarterly reports, country progress reports, and a UES (available online in the Board of Directors Login or IMC [Secure Portal Login](#)), the international program also writes success stories and trip reports as part of its grant management.

***Success Stories:***

***Alaska seafood industry's knowledge, interest and projected sales grow following the ASMI Africa EMP project***

In order to assess market potential in key African countries, the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) investigated three regions: North Africa, Morocco, Egypt, Algeria & Tunisia, West Africa, Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal & Côte D'Ivoire and South Africa.

The objective of this EMP-funded project was to enable the Alaska seafood industry to design and implement a long-term strategy for Alaska seafood consumption in Africa by framing the market in terms of where it is heading, not just where it is today.

ASMI undertook initial desk research, industry interviews and consumer interviews and determined that Morocco had the best potential for Alaska seafood. ASMI then did a pre-mission visit and reported back to Alaska seafood industry about findings. FAS Rabat brought Moroccan buyers to meet with Alaskan industry at Seafood Expo Global. After reviewing the success of ASMI's mission and meeting buyers at SEG, three Alaska industry members volunteered to travel to Morocco on a follow up mission in December 2023.

During the trade survey portion of the EMP, most trade members interviewed reported interest in doing business in Africa, with four out of seven having done business in Africa at some point, two out of seven active in Africa and zero with experience in North Africa or Morocco.

Members interviewed cited resources as a barrier to entering the market. New and emerging markets are challenging for small companies and commodity sales brokers to explore with limited resources. These companies reported focused on their core business. The industry also reported a lack of established business ties. Some industry members expressed hesitation in conducting business in new and unfamiliar markets where importers have limited information about Alaska seafood. Members acknowledge this is not unique to Africa. Lack of knowledge was also reported as a barrier. Most industry members acknowledged that they do not have sufficient information about different African markets to fully evaluate potential. ASMI's presentations to the industry about the EMP project and trade mission to Morocco have helped overcome these barriers.

Following the mission to Morocco, the participants provided extensive feedback through a survey. One participant cited the participation from FAS government representatives as the "most valuable part of the mission to Morocco, stating "I felt that they were genuinely interested in connecting us to opportunities in Morocco. Mohamed and Ben were very involved and available to help."

Another participant noted that the EMP project was important because they could be "Introduced to the major players in Morocco. This knowledge would not have happened organically within the industry without ASMI's help. It just isn't feasible for a sales representative to take time away from their normal duties to explore a foreign country/market like Morocco on their own.

The participants reported that they gathered a total of 16 meaningful business contacts on the trip and reported anticipated sales of \$250,000 to \$300,000 in the next 12 months. This would be significant growth from 2023, when no direct exports from Alaska to Morocco were reported.

### ***Wild Alaska Seafood Month (WASM) Celebrates Third Year of Success***

In January 2024, ASMI programs in Europe once more collaborated on a compelling cross-border promotional campaign, marking the third installment of "Wild Alaska Seafood Month" (WASM). The

initiative was strategically designed to resonate with traditional New Year's resolutions, spotlighting the nutritional advantages of Alaska seafood for fostering a healthy lifestyle and energized start to the year ahead. Emphasizing the importance of discovering new "seafood eating occasions," particularly in markets where seasonal patterns heavily influence sales, was also a key focus.

This comprehensive promotion encompassed a multi-faceted communication strategy spanning traditional print, online platforms, and social media channels. Educational outreach through trusted spokespersons also highlighted the health and fitness benefits of incorporating Alaska seafood into one's diet. Sales support efforts were bolstered through the integration of e-commerce platforms and in-store promotions.

The digital communication campaign included digital advertorials, social media posts with influencers, e-commerce promotions, recipe apps, and virtual shopping experiences. In France, ASMI partnered with shopping platform Jow for the third year in a row, reaching over 1 million potential customers with 42,118 placements in virtual shopping baskets. In the UK, promotions were held with online retailer Ocado, which saw increases from 40-73% in customers buying an Alaska seafood brand item for the first time. Digital ads used in conjunction with in-store ads at retailer ASDA in the UK saw impressions of over 15 million. Social media campaigns with influencers reached over 3.5 million users across Europe. Digital advertorials throughout the regions saw a circulation of over 58 million.

Traditional print media collaborations with food and lifestyle magazines and trade magazines remain an integral part of the WASM campaign. This year, ads were placed in European publications, including El Pais Semanal Gastro in Spain, BBC Good Food, Delicious, Sainsbury's Magazine, and The Observer in the UK.

Partnerships with fitness/wellness influencers and fitness associations brought additional visibility, highlighting Alaska Seafood as the ideal food for athletes and wellness. In Germany, the Alaska Seafood CrossFit Games were held. During the games, 60 athletes were fueled by wild Alaska salmon jerky and Alaska pollock tacos. During the games, 926 other competitive athletes were reached through social media. In the UK, ASMI partnered with a well-known wellness and yoga influencer to hold an immersive yoga event. The event was attended by 15 social media influencers who tried Alaska canned salmon sushi bowls and surimi chunks. The event resulted in 36 positive social media posts about Alaska seafood, reaching over 1.5 million users.

While suffering from the pandemic's long-term effects, HRI campaigns are continuing to gain steam in Europe. During WASM, promotions for Alaska seafood were held during "Wild Week" in Portugal and Spain where 14 of the best restaurants in the region showcased Alaska species. In Germany, Le Feu restaurant featured three Alaska seafood specials on the menus of their 20 locations. A photo and video production campaign took place at Le Feu to further promote Alaska seafood in local gastronomy. The restaurant reported a 34% increase in sales of Alaska seafood items and served over 140,000 consumers during this time.

Retail promotions across Europe spanned six retailers in France and Germany, 15 fish shops and delicatessens in Spain and Portugal, three retailers in the UK, and one in the Netherlands. ASMI supported retailers in various ways, including in-store demos sampling of canned and filleted salmon, POS materials, web banner promotions, in-store recipe barkers, WASM/ ASMI logos on packs, and

partnerships with brands for price promotions. While 2024 results are still pending, sales support efforts at retailers and HRI have seen a sales value of around \$1.2 million.

***Sakana&Japan Festival: Alaska Seafood Featured in Japan's largest consumer seafood event***

The ASMI Japan program is building on its co-sponsorship in the country's largest consumer-facing fish and seafood event. The Sakana&Japan Festival is Japan's premier outlet for a wide variety of gourmet seafood dishes and seafood products available locally and an effective platform for introducing seafood commodities from around the world.

The event organizer held three events from November 2023 to March 2024; the first was in Odaiba Park in Tokyo, the second in Yoyogi Park in Tokyo, and the third in Ogimachi Park in Osaka. Event organizers granted ASMI Japan free media coverage in the first event due to high interest from consumers about wild, Alaska-origin seafood. The booth design and signage highlighted the key 'wild, natural, and delicious' touch points while placing the ASMI logo on official flyers, posters, and other related event materials granted Alaska Seafood high visibility. The consumer event was a highly effective use of time, and a cost-efficient investment resulting in 88 pieces of earned media coverage worth \$1,524,623 in ad value. There were 172,000 visitors to the festival over four days.

At the following two events, ASMI became a sponsor of the "Alaska-origin Ikura Sockeye Salmon Rice Bowl" booth. The event organizer sourced seasoned Alaska-origin salted sockeye ikura for the Yoyogi and Osaka events, which was provided by Kyokuyo, one of the top five largest Japanese seafood companies. The organizer also handled the sales operations of the ikura rice bowl at the booth. Combined, the two events generated over the following earned over \$2.36 million in media coverage and the events welcomed over 206,000 people.

Furthermore, the ASMI Japan program has created a fruitful partnership with Asana Mori, a fishmonger and influencer known as "Sakanaya-no Mori-san." Ms. Mori participated in ASMI's culinary retreat hosted in Sitka in June of 2023. Ms. Mori has a YouTube subscriber audience of 316k and 98.9k Instagram followers and was announced as the Alaska Seafood Special Ambassador in November of 2023. Since her assignment, she has worked with ASMI on various activities, including as a partner at the Osaka Japan Festival. Ms. Mori had the most popular booth at the festival, serving a 'Cream cheese Alaska salmon rice burger' and 'Alaska crab stick fries' dish made with Alaska pollock surimi. Alaska Seafood made its debut at the Sakana&Japan Festival and will continue to take advantage of the wide-reaching media exposure and opportunity for consumers to experience Alaska's seafood products firsthand.

***ASMI Continued Development of Alaska Seafood Market in Poland***

Starting with a focused trade mission to Poland in 2019, ASMI has intensified its efforts to establish new partnerships with Polish producers to increase the availability and visibility of Alaska seafood in the country over the years. Historically, Poland has been mainly known as one of the largest seafood processors in Europe. While this is still the case, domestic consumption has also grown due to the

economic upswing and increasing average income levels that have led Polish consumers to become interested in higher-valued foods, presenting opportunities for Alaska seafood.

In the second half of 2023, ASMI established two new partnerships with leading Polish companies to support them in growing their brands at retail. Capitalizing on the strong pre-Christmas season, ASMI cooperated with seafood trader Suempol in an advertisement campaign, which reached its peak in November of that year. To promote their Alaska assortment, the campaign consisted of placing large-format posters in cities across Poland, accompanied by media and online features, which reached more than 1.2 million consumers, and in-store shelf hangers installed in 2,400 retail outlets around the country. The company also added the Alaska seafood logo to its packaging to highlight the Alaska origin more prominently.

In September, a new collaboration started between a company in Poland and Abramczyk, a leading Alaska salmon retailer. This company is a strong supporter of Alaska and also lists cod in its portfolio. Instead of hosting one traditional POS or media campaign, which has been done several times in the past, the idea was to implement several guerilla marketing concepts over the course of the year. The first activities took place in the form of a flag promotion on the famous Sopot Pier, which is one of the top tourist destinations on the Polish coast. Another promotion took place at a speed racing cup, a popular sport in the country.

Contimax, a Polish processor, has partnered with the program and has collaborated with leading retailers and discounters such as Biedronka, Lidl, and Kaufland. The Suempol campaign involved a volume of 16,000 kg, valued at US \$ 400,000. Furthermore, the Abramczyk advertisements had a reach of over 2 million consumers.

To further develop the market for Alaska seafood in Poland, a delegation of industry representatives will visit Alaska in July 2024 to gain first-hand experience and build new relationships with AK seafood producers.

### ***Canned Alaska Salmon Opportunity in France***

Canned products are the perfect category to move volume and add value to lower-graded and smaller fish, especially in years with strong salmon runs and possible oversupply of certain species. While canned salmon is a well-established and traditionally strong category in the U.S. domestic market or countries like the UK, the product is not widely known in most parts of Europe. However, Belgium is one of the few countries where canned salmon is regularly available. For this reason, ASMI partnered with producer *Fish Tales* to help grow this category and possibly extend it to neighboring countries. Proof that such efforts could very well be successful was recorded in January 2024, when the German discounter *Lidl* tested a canned salmon product under their home brand *Nixe*.

To target Belgian consumers at the point of sale, ASMI partnered with *Fish Tales* to run a campaign during the first quarter of 2023. The campaign consisted of the development and placement of a branded can cover featuring the Alaska Seafood logo to highlight the Alaska origin, as well as a leaflet containing key information and a QR code, which linked back to ASMI's regional website, a contest for shoppers and some cooking inspiration. Can covers and leaflets were added to 140,000 cans of pink salmon to push this niche product as the ideal choice for affordable, high-quality protein in the context of ever-increasing

prices among consumers. The partnership had a retail sales value of USD \$440,000 with an investment of \$10,000 in MAP funds, \$14,000 in match funds, and \$14,000 by *Fish Tales*, resulting in an ROI of 1,058%.

Due to the success of the first campaign, reflected in the sales value, ROI, and positive feedback received from consumers and store managers, a second edition of the collaboration, extending to both Belgium and Northern France, is currently underway during April 2024. In addition to the can covers and leaflet, this renewed effort includes the participation of leading influencers with a background in fitness and sports, promoting the message that canned Alaska salmon is the best choice for a conscious, healthy diet. The messaging also emphasizes the responsible origins of wild Alaska salmon.

ASMI's long-term goal is to build a new, younger consumer audience for Alaska canned salmon in Western European markets by increasing consumers' awareness and understanding of the product whilst creating a modern and appealing product image.