



Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute

Domestic Marketing and Communications Committee Joint Meeting

**Wednesday, December 4, 2024
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM Alaska Time**

APPROVED MINUTES (on 11/07/2025)

I. Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at 9:03 AM by Chair Lilani Estacio-Dunn.
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II. Anti-Trust Statement

- Chair Lilani Estacio-Dunn read the anti-trust statement.

III. Roll Call

Communications Committee Members Present:

- Cassandra Squibb (Chair)
- Hannah Heimbuch (Vice Chair)
- Everette Anderson
- Jessica Keplinger
- John Ochoa
- Julianne Curry
- Rachel Kallander
- Shannon Ford Ward
- Tracy Welch

Domestic Members Present:

- Lilani Estacio-Dunn (Chair)
- Kendall Whitney (Vice Chair)
- Pat Shanahan
- Mike Cusack
- Greg Ness
- Jeff Welbourn
- Sidney Riggs
- Scott Sandvig
- Thea Thomas
- Ron Christianson
- Michael Erickson
- John Daly

Also Present:

- ASMI staff and other members of the industry and public.

Absent Members:

- Nicole Kimball
 - Tomi Marsh
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IV. Approval of Agenda

- Motion to approve the agenda:
 - **1st:** Julianne Curry
 - **2nd:** Shannon Ford Ward
 - **Motion passed**
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V. Approval of Minutes (All Hands on Deck 2023)

- Motion to approve the minutes:
 - **1st:** Shannon Ford Ward
 - **2nd:** Mike Cusack
 - **Motion passed**
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VI. Chair's Welcome and Roundtable Introduction

- **Welcome Remarks:** Chair Cassandra Squibb thanked attendees, provided an overview of the meeting agenda, and emphasized the importance of committee collaboration.

Motion for Roundtable Introductions:

- **1st:** Julianne Curry
- **2nd:** Pat Shanahan
- **Motion passed**

Roundtable introductions commenced.

VII. Public Comment

- No public comments were provided.
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VIII. Joint Committee Discussion on Strategy

The committee explored strategic approaches to align domestic marketing and communications efforts, focusing on shared challenges and opportunities.

1. **Whitefish Marketing:**
 - There is a recognized need for a cohesive approach to promoting whitefish, with emphasis on sustainability messaging and product availability. A tactical review of marketing opportunities was proposed to identify key action points that bridge domestic and communications efforts.
2. **Using Nutritional Data:**
 - Recent nutritional studies highlighting the benefits of Alaska seafood present an opportunity to refine messaging. Discussions focused on incorporating these findings into promotional materials to strengthen consumer appeal, particularly in health-conscious markets.
3. **Cod Market Opportunities:**
 - The decline in Atlantic cod quotas offers a unique opportunity to position Alaska cod as a sustainable and high-quality alternative. Potential strategies include leveraging storytelling around Alaska's fisheries and sustainability practices to differentiate the product.
4. **Strategic Alignment:**
 - The committee emphasized the need for greater clarity in assigning tasks between technical, domestic, and communications committees. A streamlined process for responding to species-specific marketing needs was identified as a priority.
5. **Cruise Ship Engagement:**

- A review of cruise ship marketing was suggested, with discussions on the overlap between tourism and seafood promotion. Questions were raised about the feasibility, cost, and potential return on investment of increasing cruise ship collaborations.

6. Improving Collaboration:

- Suggestions were made to enhance communication across committees, particularly during All Hands meetings, to ensure a unified approach to shared goals and deliverables.
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IX. Trade and Consumer PR Update (Edelman Team)

Presented by: Katie Goldberg and Tessa Ward

Highlights:

- The team emphasized TikTok as a vital platform for reaching younger demographics, integrating influencer campaigns to bridge content across social media.
 - "Longevity Lab," a new program targeting Baby Boomers, was introduced to educate this demographic on the health benefits of wild-caught seafood.
 - Campaign effectiveness was underlined through detailed tracking of links to measure website traffic and consumer engagement.
 - Discussions explored the alignment of Alaska seafood with viral content trends, such as grocery hauls and meal prep tutorials, ensuring the brand remains relevant in evolving consumer spaces.
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X. Retail Update

Presented by: Mark Jones

The update highlighted emerging retail trends and the importance of positioning Alaska seafood in key markets through innovative branding and targeted campaigns.

XI. Foodservice Update

Presented by: Jann Dickerson

Focus was placed on expanding partnerships with foodservice providers and enhancing the visibility of Alaska seafood on menus across various establishments.

XII. RFM/GSA Update

Presented by: Tom Sunderland

The presentation included updates on Responsible Fisheries Management certifications and their role in supporting the sustainability message for Alaska seafood.

XIII. Continuation of Joint Committee Discussion

Discussions continued, focusing on actionable insights and recommendations for species-specific marketing strategies and operational improvements.

1. Species Prioritization:

- **Pink Salmon:** Recognized as a priority species due to high volume but low market value. Ideas included rebranding efforts, leveraging canned salmon trends, and exploring product innovation such as marinades and pre-prepared options.
- **Keta Salmon:** Integration into influencer programs was recommended, with a focus on aligning promotions with industry feedback and market demand.
- **Sablefish and Sole/Flounder:** Opportunities to rebrand these species as premium offerings were discussed to enhance their market appeal.

2. Marketing Collaboration:

- Potential partnerships with Alaska and Washington ferries, as well as cruise ships, were explored. The focus was on using these platforms to promote Alaska seafood and increase consumer exposure.
- Retail engagement initiatives, such as fishermen serving as ambassadors, were proposed to strengthen the connection between consumers and the Alaska seafood industry.

3. Challenges and Resources:

- The committee discussed the importance of focusing resources on high-impact initiatives, given budgetary constraints. There was consensus on evaluating the ROI of potential programs, such as cruise ship collaborations, before committing significant resources.
- Concerns about the potential return of Russian-origin seafood to the market were raised, emphasizing the importance of doubling down on Alaska-origin branding.

4. Consumer Trends:

- Emphasis was placed on aligning marketing efforts with current trends, such as the growing popularity of tinned fish and cost-effective meal solutions. These trends present an opportunity to reintroduce Alaska seafood to new consumer segments.

5. Strategic Recommendations:

- The committee proposed a shift from reactive crisis management to proactive messaging, highlighting Alaska seafood's quality and sustainability credentials.

- Further research was recommended to assess the potential impact of specific initiatives, including partnerships with ferries and cruise lines.
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XIV. Old Business and Good of the Order

- The committee reiterated the importance of aligning efforts across programs to "move the needle" and deliver measurable results for Alaska seafood.
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XV. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn at 12:02 PM:
 - **1st:** Julianne Curry
 - **2nd:** Pat Shanahan
 - **Motion passed**