

ALASKA SEAFOOD MARKETING INSTITUTE

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May, 2013
TO: ASMI Board of Directors
FROM: Randy Rice, ASMI Seafood Technical Program Director
SUBJ: Program Review: Activities from 12/2012

Program Objectives

- Support efforts that ensure safe, quality Alaska seafood products reach the consumer.
- Position program as a source of technical and scientific information.
- Lead technical focus on health benefits of Alaska salmon/seafood.
- Educate and inform the market, trade and consumers on the purity and quality of Alaska's product.

Background

While in former years the primary focus of this program was on quality, in recent years the program has expanded to include issues of purity (seafood contaminants), fisheries ecological sustainability, organic certification, food safety, and health. Though the program continues some baseline effort on quality at the Alaska industry level, the quality message emphasis has shifted somewhat to foodservice and retail partner applications. A significant component of the Technical Program's effort is in support of the marketing programs on technical matters.

Projects

By a wide margin, the vast majority of effort during this period was in support of the Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) Certification initiative, underway at Board direction with Global Trust Certification Ltd. Meetings, conference calls, and document reviews are ongoing. It is noteworthy the calls of interest I get on RFM from fishing groups in other areas, such as Canada. Many are interested in an alternative to MSC. I held RFM briefing meetings in a one-on-one format at Boston and Brussels shows, and the flexible format (in lieu of a scheduled workshop) seemed to be appreciated. I met with my counterpart from Iceland for two days in Seattle for detailed and technical work on the RFM Conformance Criteria, and also topics relating to benchmarking of ecolabel

schemes, as those being pursued by GSSI and Monterey Bay.

I am assembling evidence for a new piece directed at demonstrating that Continuous Fishery Improvement is inherent in the Alaska management structure.

Efforts continue on USDA nutrient database values, which have been revised and numbers may not be representative of species inherent attributes. Joyce Nettleton has been contracted to assist with new sampling efforts and interfacing with USDA on the nutrient database issue.

Publications

Reprints were accomplished for sustainability pieces, which have been in high demand.

Work has been ongoing for reprinting meat color guides, with some new digitizing work necessary to complete the sockeye color guide.

Other activities

I attended 2 GSSI meetings at the Boston show, and efforts continue to stay involved and informed on the GSSI, and its potential impact on our RFM model.

GSSI meetings were also attended in Brussels.

I have had multiple meetings with Sustainable Fisheries Partnership in an attempt to arrive at better recognition for RFM, and facilitate a positive recommendation from them to their retail partners on Alaska salmon.

We prepared, as part of preparations for the SFP meetings, a white paper detailing the hatchery related conditions from the last MSC audit, and how they are being addressed, and verified, through the RFM process.

The Technical Committee meet April 3. Representatives from Global Trust were at the meeting and heard comments and concerns with the Chain of Custody audit program, and are responding with efforts to improve the program. Also in attendance at the meeting was Joyce Nettleton who briefed the committee on the USDA Nutrient database situation, and a way forward was decided. The committee voted to continue sampling efforts in order to provide USDA with more valid data for their database. I am preparing a proposal with budget per the committee's direction to continue the effort over the next year.

As in previous years, I met with FAO and Globefish partners in Brussels just prior to the ESE. I prepared a presentation and briefing on the RFM program for that meeting.

Executive Director Mike Cerne and I met with a group of NGOS, trade, and industry at the Boston show on IUU. The meeting was organized by SeaWeb, and it would appear that IUU will be an upcoming effort by the NGO community. We stressed that if the

NGO community wishes the support and participation from industry, proposed solutions be clearly focused on problem sources. Broad-brush solutions that overlay hurdles or requirements on fisheries and governments that are doing a good job, are not appropriate and will not garner support from industry. The potential I fear here is registration or certification programs that would place additional burdens on fisheries/governments that are already dealing satisfactorily with IUU, similar to what we have seen in the sustainability ecologo efforts.

Travel, Conferences, Trade shows

Trade shows: Boston and Brussels.

I participated in the Bering Sea Fishing Conference in Seattle, and was on a sustainability panel.

I traveled to Europe in January and had numerous meetings with buyers and importers on the RFM, and upcoming salmon season. As a stopover from the Euro January trip, I met in Ireland with Global Trust for strategic planning, future of RFM, and potential for an RFM "alliance".