

ALASKA SEAFOOD MARKETING INSTITUTE

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April, 2014
TO: ASMI Board of Directors
FROM: Randy Rice, ASMI Seafood Technical Program Director
SUBJ: Program Review: Activities from Oct 2013

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 and elements of technology and processing, 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

Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) Certification initiative, underway at Board direction continues to dominate my activities. Meetings, conference calls, and document reviews are ongoing and seemingly never-ending. The number of splinter, additional, or new sustainability efforts, initiatives, and new groups emerging never ceases to amaze.

RFM Update

Fishery Certifications and annual audits proceed. Salmon annual audit was lengthy and required a good deal of diligence, owing to the MSC recertification effort on this fishery,

the hatchery issues, and the emergence of a new paper on hatchery effects. Other annual audits were completed without much difficulty.

RFM Fishery Certification on a 12 species complex of flatfish is now complete and the fishery is certified.

AK fishing groups interested in other fishery certifications are making inquiries regarding the future of RFM certification. It is my view that direction for any new certifications to be undertaken would come from the Board.

Accreditation of the Chain of Custody standard is now complete. ISO 65 accredited CBs can begin auditing to the standard as soon as we develop some guidance documents. In addition, after completion, we can consider revisions to the standard, and we have identified some areas that may need updating or modification. Guidance documents are in the edit process.

There was a large increase in interest of the RFM Chain of Custody seal as a result of the movement away from MSC by Alaska Salmon. There are now 67 certified companies.

We sent numerous eblasts out to continue to provide updates and transparency on RFM reports and milestones. We also continued updating the website with fishery info, the RFM complaints and appeals process, and list of CoC approved suppliers.

We sponsored a luncheon (featuring Alaska Black Cod) at World Seafood Congress in Newfoundland, October, 2013.

We were a sponsor of a Seafare event at Aquarium of the Pacific, Long Beach October 2013. We are having some discussion with AOP and other neutral NGOs as we look for positive collaboration on RFM with an NGO partner.

We continue dialog with interests associated with the Global Seafood Sustainability Initiative (GSSI) and monitor the developments, particularly as the ramifications for RFM are important in advancing the model. We are concerned with the populating of GSSI Working Groups with persons of ISEAL or eNGO leanings.

OTHER PROJECTS

Efforts continue on USDA nutrient database values. With assistance from the technical committee and 3 companies, we completed re-sampling for sockeye salmon. USDA indicates they will accept the results and include them in the next version of the Nutrient Database. We intend to do other species in future years as budget allows, and next candidates will be discussed at the next Technical Committee meeting.

Publications

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

We are working on revising the MPA brochure.

Work was completed on reprinting meat color guides.

Other activities

I am in discussion with GAPP on the issue of Alaska Pollock nomenclature, and whether to consider an initiative on naming change.

Travel, Conferences, Trade shows

I attended the World Seafood Congress, presenting on Sustainability.

I attended the Boston Seafood show. I held numerous one-on-one meetings with interested parties in RFM and sustainability.

I attended the U.N. FAI Codex Committee for Fish and Fisheries, and the U.N. FAO Subcommittee on Fish Trade.