



Surefish

The Seafood Quality Specialists

413 3rd Ave. W.
Seattle, WA 98119

Phone: 206-284-2686
Fax: 206-284-2667
Email: surefish@surefish.com

Surefish Quality News



**SPRING 2004
ISSUE**

The Seafood Quality Specialists

Country of Origin Labeling Act Update - Allison Corcoran

As part of the 2002 farm bill, the mandatory Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) Act was scheduled to apply for all products appearing in stores on September 30, 2004. However, included in the 2004 spending bill passed by congress in January was a two year moratorium for COOL on beef, pork, lamb, peanuts and fresh fruits and vegetable. Seafood was not included in the delay. This means that all seafood product on retail shelves as of September 30th, this year, must comply with the regulation. Processed foods and ingredients in processed foods are exempt.

The regulation requires retailers to inform consumers of the country of origin of the covered commodities (just seafood, at this point). This information can be provide by means of a label, stamp, mark, placard or other clear and visible sign either on the commodity or on the package, display, holding unit or bin containing the product at the point of consumer sale. Many retailers have already notified their suppliers regarding this requirement, and asked suppliers to indicate how they will be following the regulation in order to provide the retailers with accurate information. In addition to the country of origin, the regulation requires that all seafood product be labeled to indicate whether or not the product is wild or farmed. To have a U.S. country of origin label, the fish must be caught in US waters or by a US flagged vessel, and processed in the US or aboard the US flagged vessel. If the fish undergoes any processing elsewhere, that country must also be put on the label.

**Country -of- Origin:
From Farmed Fish
grown, harvested
and processed in
China**

Sample Tilapia Country of Origin Label

Visit our booth at the Boston Seafood Show #3331

President's Piece - Lisa Goche'

2004 Sneak Preview:

A wonderful 2004 to each and every one of you!

This year is going to bring a lot of exciting new additions to the range of services Surefish already offers. I'd like to give you a sneak preview on two of these, which are being launched in response to client requests:

- Surefish East Coast

Location – Massachusetts. Expected launch – April/May

Range of services – inspection, HACCP, auditing, quality systems design, and more.

Surefish East Coast will bring to you the strength of the combined experience and resources of Surefish, Seafood Quality Specialists and Stephen Thompson – Seafood Quality Systems. A great many of you know Stephen from his many years in the seafood industry. Please see Stephen's article on page 5.

- Surefish Vietnam—New Services

Expected launch – May/June

Range of services – HACCP and sanitation training, plan development and auditing, and **now - seafood inspection services.**

Surefish Vietnam, headquartered out of Ho Chi Minh City, has been active all over the country since 2002 assisting producer's there in compliance with U.S. buyer and FDA requirements. This year, in response to client demand we will be adding seafood inspection.

Our website will be updated soon with these, and other offerings. I welcome your suggestions for new services, or improvements to existing ones. Please contact me with your comments at (206) 284-2686 or lisa@surefish.com.

Visit us at the
International Boston
Seafood Show
Booth # 3331

| Inside this issue: | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Net Weight Determination | 2 |
| Seattle Lab Moves Location | 2 |
| Undercover Seafood Shopper | 3 |
| Tilapia | 3 |
| Seafood Diet | 4 |
| Bioterrorism Act Update | 4 |
| Employee Profile- Sean Crosby | 5 |
| Seafood Quality Systems | 5 |
| Country of Origin labeling Act | 6 |

ACC - Aquaculture Certification - Bart Cox

Aquaculture Certification Council, Inc. is a nongovernmental body established to certify social, environmental and food safety standards at aquaculture facilities throughout the world. This nonprofit, nonmember public benefit corporation builds on elements of the voluntary Global Aquaculture Alliance Responsible Aquaculture Program in a certification system that combines site inspections and effluent sampling with sanitary controls, therapeutic controls and traceability.



benefits of applying best management practices and the advancing scientific technology that directs them.

Aquaculture Certification Council, Inc. offers a "process" rather than "product" certification, with an orientation toward seafood buyers, not consumers. While the ACC program is visually represented by a "Best Aquaculture Practices" certification mark, this image is not to be used on seafood product packaging at the retail level. Surefish is certified by and performs audits for the Aquaculture Certification Council.

Part of ACC's mission is to help educate the aquaculture public regarding the

For more information regarding ACC certification and auditing please contact Bart

Net Weight Determination - Christine Keenen

When purchasing seafood, most people assume that the weight stated on the package is the actual weight of the seafood product, not the packaging material. This seems like a basic enough concept. However, complications can arise when the weight turns out to be not what is stated. This can happen for a variety of reasons, but whatever the cause, it becomes an issue that increases exponentially as the size of the cargo increases. For example, a 1% deviation does not sound like a large amount, and 1% of a 50-pound container is a mere half-pound. But 1% of a lot that contains one million pounds is 10,000 pounds. Whatever the value of the particular seafood product, this equals a lot of money. In order to stay competitive, producers must be able to package their product so that in a given lot the net weight equals the stated net weight without excessive over packing.

There can be different ways to determine the net weight, depending upon species and product form, but the first step is always to determine the gross weights of representative samples, and then from each sample determine the packaging (fiber and poly) tares. After this the process deviates. The second, more complex, objective is to determine the water weight - the often-overlooked "natural packaging material", i.e. the glaze percentage.

For larger IQF products, such as H&G salmon, cod, tuna, and in shell crab products, the glaze is removed by taking the product from the low temperature storage, weighing the sub-sample and then gently washing under a spray of cool water until all ice seen or felt is removed. The product is drained for a specific time period, and then reweighed. The difference between the two weights is the weight of the glaze, and a glaze percentage is calculated from these figures. For shrimp, scallops and smaller IQF products, instead of removing the glaze with a spray, it is removed by submerging and agitating product in a tepid water bath. For these products the size of the sieve used for draining is important.

For block product, an entirely different method is used: drip loss. It is important to understand that though both drip loss

and deglazing describe water weight they are not comparable. A glaze describes the amount of added water that is being used to cover the product to prevent freezer burn or dehydration, whereas the drip loss will incorporate the water that binds the product together, as well as some of the naturally occurring moisture of the fish itself. There are two ways to temper product for determining drip loss: 1) placing the block of fish in an impermeable bag into a circulating water bath until a specified internal core temperature is reached, then removing it, and allowing it to drain before reweighing; or 2) air thawing at a constant room temperature of 70 F.

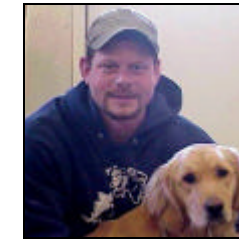
For some products, like ikura and crabmeat, the thawed product drained weight is used to determine the water weight. These products are completely thawed, and product has lost all rigidity. This method is not typically used for trade, as it is more indicative of a quality issue.

Colder product and colder glaze water will yield a higher glaze weight. Additives that are incorporated into the glaze water to prevent chipping are molecularly heavier and will weigh more once adhered to the product. A common misconception is that more additives will yield a higher glaze, conversely, the water is what sticks and it will only stick if it is ice cold. Another problem can arise when the glaze is no longer protecting the product but is found as a clump of ice somewhere, typically on the bottom of the case. At this point, it is no longer "glaze" but "excess weight" and considered both a quality and quantity defect.

Another area where net weights can stray is in the variances of the weight of packaging material that is incorporated when packing the product. It is important to weigh samples from each case of poly and each pallet of fiber that is used to create the tare being applied. Often the weight of the packaging material can vary depending on distributor(s). It is important to know these weights and calculate the tare accordingly, in order to most accurately produce products of consistent and correct net weight.

Employee Bio - Sean Crosby

Name: Sean Crosby
Title: Seafood Inspector



Years with Surefish: 2.5

Where did you grow up?

I spent my early years "Down in the shadow of the penitentiary" (Monroe, Wa.), to borrow from Springsteen, but did most of my "growing up" in Anchorage, Ak. So I'll claim that as my hometown.

What was your first job?

My first paying job was picking strawberries outside of Monroe. My friends and I picked all summer; strawberries, raspberries and if memory serves - squash or zucchini as the summer wore on. When picking berries, we'd wake up at 0600 and ride our bikes 2 miles outside of town and pick for 8 hours. We got paid \$1.00 per "flat" which are those 3 1/2 sq. ft boxes that berries come in, the best picker of us could pick 10 in a day. The smartest of us would fill the bottom with dirt and top it with berries and pick 15 in a day.

How did you become involved in the seafood industry?

The same old story really, with 4 years of college/ trade school and much more student loan debt than earning potential. I answered an ad in the newspaper for seafood processors working aboard a floater outside of Valdez., Ak. for Herring season 1991. I spent 6 months on board and although I only left with a few thousand dollars I gained valuable experience and was fortunate enough to meet Karin Holbrook. We have been a team ever since.

Why Surefish?

I initially came to Surefish from another seafood job that I was bored with. Karin had taken over the Dutch Harbor lo-

cation a year previous and raved about it, so when a position in the lab became available, I applied. Definitely one of my better decisions.

What is the best aspect of your job?

Surefish has been an incredible experience for me, getting the opportunity to affect change, not simply to brand something as "good" or "bad". For instance, we inspect product and find issues with color or texture or whatever and then get to offer our opinions based on our experiences on how to fix the problem, and in many cases we see immediate, gradual improvement. It can be really rewarding. I also enjoy the personal contact with fishermen and buyers, there are a lot of really intriguing people in this industry.

What previous experience has helped you the most in your present position?

Definitely, my experiences as a production foreman. Understanding that speed shouldn't increase to the point that quality must suffer. We're all in this together, if just one producer floods the market with inferior product it can have a lasting effect on people around the world buying Alaska seafood.

What are your hobbies?

My favorite hobby is fly fishing for the hard fighting King salmon on the Anchor River on the Kenai Peninsula, but I've discovered that Sockeye in the Bristol Bay region put up a hell of a fight on a light rod as well.

What is your favorite seafood dish?

When I first started at Surefish I had the opportunity to work in Cordova where I first tasted King Salmon chili, that is the best seafood dish I've ever had. But any Alaska salmon or cod will do.

Seattle Lab Moves Location

The Seattle Laboratory has moved from its Pier 89 location to Pier 91. We are still within the City Ice Cold Storage complex. Building 89 is being torn down to make way for parks and parking as part of the development of the Elliot Bay Waterfront Park and Amgen corporate center. As most moves, things were chaotic packing and unpacking and transporting the office and lab equipment. But we have moved in. Our new location shall provide all that we need to perform inspections and host the upcoming Pollock Roe auctions. Moving is an opportunity to organize and assess the things we think we need and distinguish them from junk. Positive attitudes from the staff in Seattle are making this transaction smooth. Please feel free to visit us at Building 40, Pier 91, 2001 W. Garfield, Seattle, if you happen to be in the neighborhood. Our phone and fax numbers remain the same.

Surefish performs FDA Reconditioning!

Surefish is in the forefront among laboratories whose work in the area of FDA Reconditioning is recognized and uniformly accepted by this agency.

Let Surefish aid you in the clearing of entries that have been detained.

Surefish East Coast and Seafood Quality Systems – Article by Stephen Thompson

Greetings.

Seafood Quality Systems is excited and honored to join with Surefish, Seafood Quality Specialists in offering a range of services to the seafood industry on the East Coast. Our partnership will bring independent seafood inspections, quality systems design, HACCP plan design and review, food safety and security audits, and technical support, all with the same professional expertise our clients have come to respect, to the East Coast.

Surefish and Seafood Quality Systems look forward to servicing our valued East Coast clients with our expanding operations. Please contact me on (401) 935-2088 or at stephen.thompson3@verizon.net.

Thank you and we look forward to being of assistance.

Stephen Thompson

Check us out on the web:

www.surefish.com