

## First Argentine Fishery Seeks MSC Certification

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is pleased to announce that the national Patagonia Scallop Fishery is seeking certification under the MSC's certification and eco-labeling program for sustainable and well-managed fisheries. This is the first scallop fishery in the world as well as the first South Atlantic fishery to undergo a full scientific assessment for MSC certification.



Glaciar Pesquera S.A., a joint venture between a Canadian company, Clearwater Seafoods, and its Argentine partner has contracted with Organización Internacional Agropecuaria (OIA) in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to lead the full assessment of the fishery against the MSC's strict environmental standard. This step follows a pre-evaluation report, conducted by OIA.

"The Argentine Federal Fishery Council, the Undersecretary of Fishery and the INIDEP (Fishery Research Institute) have played an enormous role in the management of this fishery. We are proud to be involved in further developing the management of this fishery to ensure the continued health and sustainability of this resource. Both fishing companies who participate in this fishery help fund research and provide 100% observer coverage. MSC certification will legitimize and reward our efforts to be environmentally responsible", stated Eduardo Gonzalez Lemmi, President of Glaciar Pesquera.

This deep-water scallop fishery is harvested by four factory vessels. The fishery is conducted in sandy areas with strong currents, and disturbance to the bottom habitat is considered to be acceptable for this fishery, according to OIA's pre-evaluation. "We are pleased to see the scallop fishery moving forward for possible MSC certification. This evaluation process will ensure sustainable management, environmental responsibility and transparency of an Argentinian fishery," notes Guillermo Cañete, Co-

ordinator Programa Marino, with Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina.

Jim Humphreys, Regional Director of the MSC's Americas office, noted that scallops are commonly in the top ten list of consumed seafood products, and stated: "If successful, Patagonia scallops will add another important species to the list of sustainably sourced seafood to meet demand from US and European markets. The growing number of fisheries seeking MSC certification is a sign of the importance of sustainable management practices to stakeholders, consumers, fishers and processors around the world."

An independent evaluation will be conducted by a team of experts who will examine the status of the scallop beds, the effect fishing has on the marine environment and the effectiveness of the fishery management system. The certification body predicts the assessment, which will begin in January, will take between nine and ten months. If the fishery is certified and traceability is established, Patagonian scallop products will be eligible to use the distinctive blue and white MSC eco-label on packaging which gives consumers a quick and easy way to identify the best environmental choice in seafood.

Eleven fisheries have been certified under the MSC program. Sixteen, including Chilean hake are now in full-assessment. Patagonia scallops will be the second South American fishery to enter full assessment. The MSC estimates that about 40 other fisheries are in the initial stages of exploring MSC certification. To date there are over 220 products carrying the MSC logo in 22 countries.

For more information regarding the Marine Stewardship Council or Chain of Custody Certification, please contact Allison at [allison@surefish.com](mailto:allison@surefish.com)

## New Allergen Labeling Law

-Allison Corcoran

Last summer, Congress passed S. 741, a bill that included the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act. The purpose of this legislation is to help consumers identify foods that can cause several allergic reactions. The Act will provide improved food labeling information to the millions of consumers who suffer from food allergies. According to the Food and Drug Administration, food allergies affect an estimated 2% of adults and about 5% of infants and young children in the United States. Up to 150 allergic reactions result in death each year, and 30,000 require life-saving emergency treatments. Currently there are no cures for food allergies, so the only successful way to manage a food allergy is to avoid the causative food. Consumers therefore depend on the labeling information to make their decisions. The new Act will require that food labels identify in plain English if the product contains any of the eight major food allergens: milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, peanuts, tree nuts, wheat and soybeans. This will help make the label understandable to the average consumer, not just food scientists. It is felt that this labeling will be especially helpful to children who need to learn to recognize the presences of substances to which they are allergic. If a product contains the milk-derived protein 'casein', then under the new regulation the

product's label will have to use the term 'milk' in addition to 'casein' so that anyone with a milk allergy would clearly understand the presence of the allergen they must avoid.

The legislation would require that food manufacturers identify a major allergen using common names, in one of three ways:

- List the allergens on the ingredients list. For example: MILK, listed with other ingredients
- Use the word 'Contains' followed by the name of the major food allergen, printed at the end of the ingredient list or next to it. For example: CONTAINS MILK.
- Use a parenthetical statement to clarify technical ingredient terms. For examples: CASEIN (MILK) or WHEY (MILK).



The legislation applies to any food that is labeled on or after January 1, 2006.

## Mystery Shopper - More Seafood KAOS!

- Mark Neely

I returned to my local Bellingham grocery outlets as the Mystery Shopper, again roving the seafood departments hoping to expose the inadequacies of unsuspecting seafood sales people. Maybe this time I will expose the seafood kiosk as a front for seafood KAOS. Or maybe not. Maybe I'll just buy some beer.

First stop was the large warehouse bulk type outlet. Their pre-packaged fresh seafood was exactly the same as three months ago. Same products, same prices, same issues, same six-day "sell by" date. Makes me wonder about an incident this summer during our family vacation we took with another family in Hawaii. Each family took turns cooking and it just so happens that our friends shopped at this outlet when we arrived and bought the "Farmed Atlantic Salmon, color added". Heidi didn't get around to "cooking" it for several days and as we ate outside that evening I noticed the texture wasn't quite right: it was mostly raw. Of course the next day my wife and I suffered King Kamehameha's revenge. Over the next two days everyone else except for our youngest who didn't eat the salmon came down with it too. Our friend insists it was the water, but I have to wonder...was the salmon crawling with *pseudomonas* colonies?...or was it the Tiki-God statue I found washed ashore? Should have thrown that damn thing back!

OK, back to mystery shopping. I went to my favorite grocery store. Everything is laid out on shaved ice. It looks nice but I wonder how cold the seafood really is. "May I help you Sir?" "Yes I'd like to pick out a dozen oysters, please". This was the first time in a couple months that they had some oysters that were smaller than my 10 year old's tennis shoe. I had to have some. As I picked up each potential little gem to see if its density felt right, I commented on their two Ahi steaks: "Those sure have a nice red color". "Well if you want to make sushi, I have some others in the back. Those have been sitting out there for a while". "Oh, but they look so fresh", I replied. He just grinned. I was hoping he would tell me his dirty little secret.



Mystery Shopper?

Well, the only certain "Seafood KAOS" happened during my vacation in Hawaii. If you suspect any "Seafood KAOS" in your area, give Surefish a call!

## What Causes Rubbery Texture?

- Christine Keeneen

What is rubbery tough texture? What are the causes? Rubbery tough texture is characterized by the flesh feeling like rubber or leather and has a high resistance to deformation and disintegration when masticated. It is apparent to the touch, as well; will feel firm and rebound a bit too well. This is an instance when a fish has a firm texture (a desired attribute) yet has an undesirable texture profile. One of the leading causes is rigor mortis, the post-death process of stiffening and then relaxing all muscles go through before decomposition sets in. Sometimes only the nape region, and perhaps part of the tail, is affected. The reason for the localization is these areas enter and complete the rigor process first. Without careful control of temperature, they complete the process too quickly while the rest of the fish goes unscathed. In addition to rigor, double freezing results in a tough texture, but this is often also dry and grainy as much of the natural moisture in the cell has been lost in the process of the cell expanding. In temperature abuse situations, where the fish partially thaws, the belly region and the tail region are often the worst hit and will exhibit the textural defects more readily.



can be readily apparent to the touch that something is wrong with a particular fish. However, may not be so apparent when the infestation is light or localized in the belly wall region. Sporidia is detected in the flesh via a candling table and looks like small pinpoint whitish dots to cloudy/hazy areas in

Another cause is parasitic in nature. A copepod called Sporidia causes a rubbery tough texture in both the raw and cooked state. When the texture problem is solely caused by parasites, it

the flesh. This must not be confused with Kudoa which are seen as very white streaks in white flesh by aid of a candling table. Kudoa sometimes cause a rubbery texture but more often result in a break down of the muscles tissue and therefore the cooked flesh is soft or mushy to varying degrees.

There are many causes for poor textural properties. Many come to light upon inspecting more than one fish and through different means like filleting, candling, and cooking fish that display textural defects in the raw or thawed state.

For more information regarding textural issues and other quality concerns, please contact us at [surefish@surefish.com](mailto:surefish@surefish.com) or give us a call at 206-284-2686.

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- Improving product marketability
- Helping you to train your staff
- Improving yield and shelf life

### Sport Fishing Report

- Sean Crosby

Ah yes, it's winter. Our favorite Alaskan streams are frozen and it's too damn cold to take the boat on the bay. So, we're done until spring, right? Yes, most of us are, but there's always ice fishing. True, ice fishing is to fishermen what synchronized swimming is to the Olympics - a filler in between the good stuff. But, what the heck, it's a chance to get outside, and enjoy a fine cigar while talking about the government.



Most freshwater species that are available Spring through Autumn are also available in winter, you just have to work for 'em. Take my advice, go out and get a gas powered ice auger. The manual unit, though it will bore a fine hole, requires you to do all of the work and leads to the opposite of a "good day of ice fishing". The equipment and bait necessary depends on the specie targeted. Generally, Northern Pike, Burbot, Rainbow Trout, Kokanee (or landlocked) Salmon and Arctic Charr (Dolly Varden to you Southerners) should be your main targets. Since winter is not bug season, flies should not be your first bait choice (though they will work in the right situation). Stick with eggs and lures. Bring a bucket and as much beer as it will take to sufficiently

numb your extremities. Tip #1: put your beer in the bucket and sit on the bucket, this keeps your beer from freezing and provides a garbage can to pack out your trash. Tip #2: When you hook your fish, wear him out at depth, if you horse him to the surface, he'll break your 10lb test line on the jagged edges of the ice before you're able to pull him through. And finally, if you're a fisherman, you're already tying flies and you have the 2005 farmers almanac in the restroom, see you on the river in May. Until then, rounding out 2004, below is a list of select fishing derbies, winning fish and prize money (where applicable):

- Kenai Peninsula Ice fishing derby - 14.41 lb (Northern Pike)
- Homer Winter King Salmon derby - 38.42 lb, \$15,461.
- Homer Jackpot Halibut derby - 352.6 lb \$51,298
- Juneau Spring King derby - 56.6 lb \$9,500.
- Ketchikan king salmon derby - 51.9 lb \$10,057
- Ship Creek king salmon derby - 45.2 lb \$5,000
- Seward Silver Salmon derby -19.79 lb \$10,000

**Fishing Trivia:** What is the largest sport fish ever caught on Rod and Reel? A 2,664 lb white shark caught off Australia in 1959.

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### Guest Article: At-Sea Processors Association

- Jim Gilmore  
Public Affairs Director APA

The New Year welcomed Kevin C. Duffy as the new Executive Director of the At-sea Processors Association (APA). Kevin retired in December as Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) after 24 years with the state agency. Kevin's strong fisheries management background and his track record of working collaboratively with stakeholders to promote conservation of fishery resources will be invaluable to APA, which represents 7 catcher/processor companies that fish in the Bering Sea groundfish fishery and in the west coast Pacific whiting fishery.



Dave Benson, APA President (left) and Kevin C. Duffy, APA Executive Director

Although Kevin will be accumulating plenty of frequent flyer miles on flights to Alaska, he will be working primarily out of APA's Seattle office, and he can be reached at kduffy@atsea.org or (206) 285-5139. Kevin succeeds Trevor McCabe, who left APA in 2004 to start a law practice in Anchorage.

At its Annual Meeting in December 2004, the APA membership selected Dave Benson of Trident Seafoods Corporation to serve as the association's president. Dave is keeping his day job as Trident's government affairs advisor, which reportedly pays better than his volunteer post at APA. Mike Coleman stepped

down after four years as APA's president.

APA is bracing for a busy year in 2005. Among other things, Congress will undertake the first rewrite of the nation's principal fisheries law, the Magnuson-Stevens Act, since 1996. The Alaska pollock fishery will operate for the first year as a certified fishery under the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) program, hope-

fully, paving the way for new market opportunities. The association members will continue to sponsor \$1.5 million annually in marine research through Alaska and Northwest universities as well as providing one million meals for hunger relief through APA's *Community Catch* program.

For more information about APA, see our website at [www.atsea.org](http://www.atsea.org).

Check out our new website: [www.surefish.com](http://www.surefish.com)

### Food Preservation Methods - Part 1

-Janis Ward

We are all saddened by the deaths of thousands in the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami. Pictures of displaced survivors fill the news and touch hearts around the world. The generosity of many has provided aid: water, food and supplies much needed by those affected by the disaster.

I was struck by the initial aid offerings of clear plastic bubbles of safe drinking water and bags both small and large of rice. These two offerings required that someone thought ahead to prepare and package these items to be available in times of emergency. Each item required the minimum of packaging waste to allow the maximum delivery of water and rice. Rice is familiar in bags but water is seldom seen in bubbles, it is usually free flowing, unpackaged and generally considered unprocessed even though municipalities usually treat water before distribution.



Water Bubbles

The necessity of being able to move aid supplies quickly and efficiently and maintain the safety of those supplies requires that all of those supplies be processed. Thus, the combination of familiar sacked rice with modern plastic bubbles of water. How many other new ways of processing or preserving foods are available now or soon to be available? Are the processes or preserving methods useful? Are they as good as previous methods? Are there any dangers in using new methods? If there are dangers, can they be over come? Or is trying something new worth the effort?

Discussing the different food preservation methods is difficult without recognizing and discussing the chemical and physical properties of foods. Humans have processed and preserved foods since the time someone noticed that some dried meat or fruit was still eatable and tasty in its dried state. The fact that water has been removed from a food to make a dried food seems, duh, obvious. However, other processes may also have helped preserve the dried food. Heat from the sun may have slightly cooked the food, wind may have quickened the drying, chemicals in the vicinity of the food may have affected the oxidation rate of the components in the food and/or any microbial organism. The sun's rays may have killed or disrupted any bacteria, microbes or insects that were attempting to use that food also. Current drying methods often treat the food product with chemicals to preserve color or texture. Those chemicals may have long unpronounceable names or may be as simple as sugar or salt.

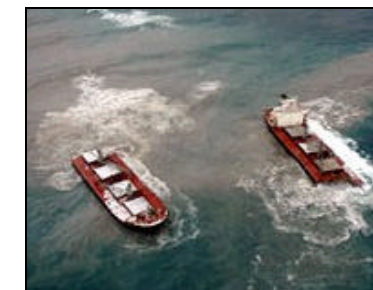
Dried foods have the advantage of being lighter in weight and take up less physical space as the same food in its original state. The small packets of rice offered as aid relief become much larger when the rice is rehydrated and cooked. Thus, something that will fit in one person's hand becomes enough to feed several persons. A most efficient choice of food for hungry people. No doubt people will always use drying as a form of food preservation.

When, it is available, most people prefer fresh foods. Fresh foods distributed beyond the garden, requires at least a minimum amount of processing to retain their freshness. Washing food is a minimal processes because it can remove or add to the food. All excess fresh food requires processing. All processing involves a trade-off that destitutes fresh foods from processed.

### Dutch Harbor Oil Spill

- Christine Keenen

The freighter, Selendang Ayu, was traveling from Seattle to China through Unimak Pass when it lost power. While trying to fix the problem in a typical winter squall the freighter ran aground and split in half between Skan Bay and Spray Cape, not far from Dutch Harbor, Unalaska. So far, over 200,000 gallons of the total 440,000 gallons of oil and 18,000 gallons of diesel aboard has spilled out. The type of oil spilled is heavy and sinks and sticks to rocks like roofing tar, making it difficult to clean up. In Dutch Harbor this winter, many who devote their lives to fishing will be busier taking care of their backyard by cleaning up after the oil spill. Many fear the weather may prevent recovering the remaining oil and currently ways to safely achieve this are being considered. The remoteness of the crash site and the weather are making the recovery and clean up efforts very difficult. The Aleutian island fisheries that occur in and around Dutch Harbor consist of salmon, halibut, rockfish, cod, pollock, black cod, herring, atka mackerel, yellowfin sole, rock



sole, turbot, other flatfish, squid, red, brown king crab, tanner and opilio crab. Now some are not likely to be affected like the ones that take place in the Bering Sea some 200 miles away. But, for others, like the Makushkin Bay Tanner Crab fishery (171,000 pound quota)

and the Pacific Cod and Black Rockfish fishery which have been cancelled, and the others which there is great worry because it is unknown how they may be affected. This disaster has taken 6 lives of the 26 crewmen aboard the vessel, however, the full extent of the damage to the people, community and environment is yet to be determined.

Visit us at the International Boston Seafood Show: Booth # 2236