

Seafood Consumption and Exports Are Up in Hawaii

Seafood consumption and exports of locally caught fresh fish are apparently rising in Hawaii, according to Richard S. Shomura, Director of the NMFS Southwest Fisheries Center's Honolulu Laboratory. The laboratory has completed an intensive survey of 105 wholesale fish dealers in Hawaii which showed that: 1) Total fish sales are \$77 million (30.6 million pounds) at the wholesale level; 2) 45 percent of the fish is locally produced, whereas 30 percent is imported from the mainland and 25 percent is from other areas; 3) fish imports amount to \$28.7 million, of which \$2.4 million is fresh fish and \$21.2 million is frozen seafood (lobster, shrimp, mahimahi, etc.). The rest comes in cans, bottles, and other processed forms; 4) exports of local fish, excluding canned tuna, amount to \$5.8 million—twelve firms are pioneering the export market including yellowfin and bigeye tunas destined for the sushi bars of Japan, the U.S. west coast, and even the mid-west; bottom fish for restaurants from New York to Dallas; and spiny lobsters for Los Angeles and the international market; 5) seafood consumption in Hawaii is estimated to be 24 pounds per person, including the tourist sector, compared with the national average of 13 pounds per person (this consumption rate is up from the Honolulu Laboratory's previous estimate for Hawaii of 20.5 pounds per person in 1977).

Shomura commented that Hawaii's seafood marketing system is going through a transition period where the traditional fish dealers are either being transformed into multifaceted seafood wholesalers or are being edged out of the wholesale market entirely. "The variety of seafood in the

markets is as great as ever," Shomura said, "but the competition for good, fresh seafood is growing." The price of ono (wahoo) has increased over 100 percent in the past 5 years because it has become a prime item on restaurant menus. Similar possibilities exist for other species, such as local mahimahi and opakapaka (pink snapper). These species are also being exported from Hawaii so relatively high prices are likely to continue in the local marketplace.

The survey findings were reported by the Laboratory's Industry Economist Samuel G. Pooley and Computer Programmer James C. Cooper in an informal report, "Total seafood volume in Hawaii's wholesale fish markets." The Honolulu Laboratory is currently conducting a survey of the retail seafood market to provide the first comprehensive picture of seafood consumption and marketing in Hawaii. Results from the retail survey are expected by mid-1983.

United States, ROK Sign New Fisheries Agreement

On 26 July representatives of the United States of America and of the Republic of Korea signed a new agreement relating to fishing activities of Korea off the coasts of the United States. The Governing International Fishery Agreement (GIFA) sets out the arrangements between the countries which will govern fishing by Korean vessels within the fishery conservation zone of the United States. It renews the initial GIFA signed in 1977 and brings it into conformity as amended by the American Fisheries Promotion Act ("Breaux Bill"). The

agreement was to come into force after the completion of internal procedures by both governments.

The signing of this agreement took place in Washington, D.C. Byong Hion Lew, Korean Ambassador to the United States, signed for the Republic of Korea. James Malone, Ambassador of the United States for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, signed for the United States. Both delegations expressed their satisfaction with the new accord, and the hope that it will strengthen cooperation between the Republic of Korea and the United States. (Source: U.S. Department of State.)

SEA SCALLOP IMPORTS SEIZED

Special agents of the National Marine Fisheries Service intercepted shipments of undersized Atlantic sea scallops from Canada which entered the United States last fall without required certification. Possession of such scallops is a violation of federal resource conservation regulations.

Sea scallop shipments are inspected at the U.S. border to ensure that they are accompanied by a certificate issued by the Canadian government. The certificate must specify that the scallops were harvested in compliance with Canadian fishery conservation regulations which are substantially consistent with U.S. regulations.

Last fall, a truck carrying scallops without proper certification ignored the warning of U.S. Customs Inspectors to return to Canada or face apprehension by National Marine Fisheries Service Special Agents. After entering the United States, the shipment of scallops was divided into two lots and trucked to Atlanta, Ga., and Dallas, Tex. NMFS Special Agents pursued the trucks to their destinations and seized 76,000 pounds of sublegal sea scallops valued at over \$350,000. The value of the scallops was confiscated for failure to comply with either the certification agreement or U.S. sea scallop meat size standards.

Regulations implementing the sea scallop management program in the United States were established by emergency action of the Secretary of Commerce on 15 May 1982. Permanent regulations were effective 13 August 1982. The sea scallop resource of the Northwest Atlantic supports a fishery valued in 1981 at over \$111 million to domestic fishermen. Approximately 45 percent of domestic sea scallop consumption is supplied by imports from Canada.

Inspection of Salmon Products for a Quality Level Designation

Although quality designations such as #1 salmon have long been used by the industry, there are no industry-wide recognized standards or specifications by which to assess compliance with such designations. The inconsistencies that currently exist in industry relative to these quality designations have resulted in material previously inspected and certified by NMFS being ultimately rejected by the buyer because of a different perception as to what constitutes a specific quality designation.

To provide industry with the desired latitude that often exists in different buyer/seller relationships, while at the same time enabling NMFS to fulfill its responsibilities relative to the inspection and certification of fishery products, the following policy has been adopted by the Agency relative to the inspection of salmon products:

The NMFS Fishery Products Inspectors will inspect product purporting to be of a specific quality level only if written detailed inspectional criteria are provided to the Government inspector. These criteria may be:

- 1) A written company specification defining the designated quality level;
- 2) criteria specified on a purchasing agreement; or
- 3) the technical requirements delineated in the applicable, established U.S. Standards for Grades of Fishery Products.

In any case, the criteria used to evaluate the designated quality level shall either be stated on the certificate or reference made to an attached document containing such criteria. Source: NMFS Seafood Research, Inspection, and Consumer Services Division.

Thawing Fish Before Processing Maintains Functional Properties

Study by the Utilization Research Division, NMFS Northwest and Alaska Fisheries Center, Seattle, Wash., of the effects of freezing and storage of Alaska pollock and cod have shown the importance of proper thawing prior to processing the flesh for quality evaluation. For example, if the fish flesh is ground while hard frozen (at -10°F to -20°F), a large loss of the functional properties occurs. These properties include water-holding capacity, emulsifying capacity, and elasticity of the flesh and are important quality indices for fish used in fabricated foods such as imitation crab or scallop meats. If the frozen fish muscle is first thawed prior to grinding by holding at 40°F in a refrigerator, then little or no change in the functional properties occurs.

The cause of this loss of functionality in muscle that has been ground while frozen is not understood. Currently, some effort is being made to study these changes because we believe this will result in an improved understanding of the effect of various process treatments on the functionality of fish flesh.

The immediate benefit of this work is the demonstrated need to thaw frozen fish flesh prior to grinding or mincing for use in processed and fabricated foods. This practice of thawing is also essential for laboratory and quality control tests on frozen fish.

Herman Groninger

SPECIAL TOP NOTICE

The U.S. Department of Commerce has prepared a report which

summarizes the prequalification announcements reported by the major purchasing agencies of the Government of Japan. These have been advertised through the "Trade Opportunities Program" (TOP) in recent months. The report includes names and addresses, products to be purchased, and Japanese Language letters prepared by the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo which U.S. firms can use to request prequalification materials and bid documents. The report is available at all Commerce district offices and from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Japan/ITA, Washington, DC 20230; Telephone (202) 377-2425.

Sample Shrimp Catches From Tortugas Cruises

The Galveston Laboratory of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Fisheries Center, is in its second phase of studies of the Tortugas shrimp fishery area. The first cruise of the second phase was completed aboard the M/V *Miss Virginia* in September 1982. The following information, obtained during the September cruise, is a summary of shrimp catch rates from sampling stations located outside the Tortugas sanctuary. Catch rates are for a 1-hour tow with a single 40-foot flat trawl, in heads-off pounds.

NMFS Sampling Station	Sept. lb/h
36 Lat. $25^{\circ}09'N$, Long. $81^{\circ}53'W$	0.3
67 Lat. $24^{\circ}59'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}05'W$	13.5
82 Lat. $24^{\circ}58'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}06'W$	17.6
97 Lat. $24^{\circ}54'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}06'W$	17.5
122 Lat. $24^{\circ}45'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}10'W$	9.8
145 Lat. $25^{\circ}07'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}19'W$	10.2
156 Lat. $25^{\circ}02'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}13'W$	12.5
181 Lat. $24^{\circ}56'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}09'W$	15.7
199 Lat. $24^{\circ}52'N$, Long. $81^{\circ}11'W$	9.6
231 Lat. $24^{\circ}41'N$, Long. $81^{\circ}33'W$	2.6
258 Lat. $25^{\circ}07'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}28'W$	1.9
280 Lat. $24^{\circ}59'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}24'W$	5.6
307 Lat. $24^{\circ}53'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}24'W$	6.5
326 Lat. $24^{\circ}46'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}31'W$	5.7
333 Lat. $24^{\circ}47'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}48'W$	5.8
362 Lat. $25^{\circ}06'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}46'W$	2.0
369 Lat. $25^{\circ}06'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}58'W$	0.8
391 Lat. $25^{\circ}01'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}58'W$	0.0
433 Lat. $24^{\circ}55'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}58'W$	1.1
454 Lat. $24^{\circ}49'N$, Long. $82^{\circ}48'W$	4.6