



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 3, 2006

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NOAA Fisheries Service Chief to Rate Chefs at National Cook-Off

NOAA Fisheries Service chief Bill Hogarth, in addition to his duties as sponsor, will also judge some of the finest American seafood prepared by renowned chefs from around the country at Sunday's Third Annual Great American Seafood Cook-off in New Orleans, Louisiana. The national seafood cook-off provides NOAA Fisheries Service the opportunity to talk about the importance of the nation's ocean-produced seafood to its citizens and the many positive steps the agency is taking to ensure that this bounty will continue for our children and grandchildren. This year's national cook-off in New Orleans is extra special because it serves as a rallying point for Gulf seafood, a safe and nutritious food choice. This annual event also is a celebration of our nation's fishing communities and of the hardworking men and women who make up this vital American industry.

WHAT: Third Annual Great American Seafood Cook-off

WHEN: Sunday, August 6, 2006 from 11:45 a.m. CDT to 4:00 p.m. CDT

WHERE: Gulf Coast Seafood Pavilion, Louisiana Foodservice Expo, New Orleans Convention Center, Section H

WHO: NOAA Fisheries Service; Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board

BACKGROUND

Twenty chefs from across the nation will vie for the title of King or Queen of American Seafood at the Aug. 6 competition at the Louisiana Foodservice Expo. The Expo runs Aug. 5-7 at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. Each chef will prepare a new domestic seafood dish that reflects his or her home state and is simple enough for most cooks to make at home. The Great American Seafood Cook-Off is a showcase for both the chefs and American seafood, and an exciting way to educate consumers about the importance of asking for American seafood at the market or in restaurants.

Chefs are coming from the far points of the United States including Kentucky, Alabama, Alaska, Delaware, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Missouri, Michigan, New York, California, Texas, Maryland, Mississippi, Georgia, North Carolina, Washington, Florida, Oregon, Colorado and a NOAA-selected chef.

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America's marine fisheries are important to the U.S. economy, with consumers spending almost \$62 billion for fishery products. Almost \$43 billion went to restaurants, carryout food establishments and caterers, so many Americans have their seafood prepared by chefs such as those at the national seafood cook-off.

It is also important this year to talk about American seafood that comes from the Gulf of Mexico. Last year, just after the conclusion of the cook-off, the first of three major hurricanes hit this area. The devastation of the region also significantly impacted the fishing communities that produce more than \$595 million a year in seafood products. It's important to note that NOAA scientists have been continuously monitoring Gulf waters and the seafood coming from the region is safe and healthy.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources.

In 2007, NOAA celebrates 200 years of science and service to the nation. From the establishment of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey in 1807 to the formation of the Weather Bureau and the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries in the 1870s, much of America's scientific heritage is rooted in these early agencies that became one under NOAA in 1970.

Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners and nearly 60 countries to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes.