
the LODESTAR

Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation, Inc.

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THE LODESTAR UPDATE

Word has it God made the world in six days. J.S. Bach composed his Sanctus to the B minor Mass in one week. Archimedes discovered the meaning of water displacement during a 20-minute bath. The world changes fast, and we are changing with it. We've discovered that publishing The Lodestar quarterly means you miss a lot of news you could be using. Projects change, technology leaps forward, ideas spark from the spontaneous combustion of new opportunity.

So we designed The Lodestar Update. The Update will be published at irregular but frequent intervals to provide breaking news on AFDF projects and industry developments, innovative ideas and future meetings and publications. We hope you will look forward to finding The Update on your desk between quarterly issues of The Lodestar.

--Krys Holmes, Editor

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ALASKAN SURIMI PRODUCTION nears reality: Alaska Pacific Seafoods in Kodiak first ran the equipment mid-Dec., after a delay to install new hydraulic systems and 2-inch water line. Starting full-scale Dec. 27th, the first run will be with frozen pollock in order to first evaluate equipment without bothering with product quality. AFDF targets 50,000 pounds produced by the end of January.

AFDF production director Chris Riley told the Board of Directors, "We said when the Royal Alaskan contract ended that we could use this chance to improve the project, and to more than make up for the delay. It was probably viewed as propaganda at the time, but it's true." AFDF and APS surimi quality control person, Landon Asakawa, have written a QC testing protocol. Its first application will be thorough analyses of Japanese factory and shore product; results will help translate surimi specs which are now in relative terms into absolute, numerical terms. The protocol will be used to define absolutely high and standard quality surimi.

During production every processing variable will be tracked, recorded, and logged into a relational data base program, along with lot-by-lot quality evaluations. That data will help determine the relationship between process variables and product quality, and will help evaluate alternate technologies and operating procedures for future surimi processing lines.

BAADER NORTH AMERICA HAS CONTRIBUTED use of a 182 filleting machine which may increase whiteness and gel strength in surimi. Its setup allows APS to conduct accurate experiments comparing two systems (with and without the 182) on the same line. This will be first 182 in commercial production in Alaska. (More information in The Lodestar, winter issue.)

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TRIDENT SEAFOODS produced 300,000 lbs. of 15-lb. shatterpacked cod and pollock fillets since its mid-August re-start; this premium product is competitively priced and headed for domestic markets. The newly reconstructed Akutan, AK. plant is also making product from seven other species of fish. High-quality products of black cod and Pacific ocean perch are destined for Japanese markets.

SURIMI ACTIVITY rises like the tide. New Plant: Frank Kawana of JAC Creative Foods says they will double crab stick production and add full-scale surimi shrimp line to product list when they move into new their facility by late January. Plant size will increase tenfold to 40,000 sq. feet; JAC plans more emphasis on new product development for other seafood analogues....New Product: Treasure Isle, Inc. gets great reception for new "First Mate" surimi-based teriyaki flavored breaded snack. They're now producing for foodservice orders; hope to go into full-scale production soon....New possibilities: Moisture Systems Corp. is setting up a continuous infrared moisture meter at the AFDF/APS surimi line, which reads moisture content directly off of samples and gives immediate results, allowing continuous adjustment of the system to ensure highest quality of product. Called a Quadra-Beam 475, it's the first of its kind used in surimi production, and probably in seafood processing. Results follow.

....New proteins: One of the primary goals of any processing line is maximizing recovery. AFDF will be examining several methods of recovering proteins lost during wash stages of surimi production. Keep your eyes open. New progress: Hot news in the industry springs up daily. Some is still in developmental stages, and thus proprietary. But if your company's surimi-related activity needs publicity, please let us know....

THE AFDF membership elected a new Board of Directors at the annual meeting in Anchorage Dec. 3rd. Rod McLachlan of Sea Alaska Products, Inc. was elected to replace William P. Woods. The other board members: Terry Baker, Arctic Alaska Seafoods; Al Burch, AK Druggers Assoc.; Dan Flynn, NPFA; Hank Eaton, F/V Skagit Bay; Jeff Hendricks, Alyeska Ocean; Robert Brophy, Icicle Seafoods; Phil Hanson, Universal Seafoods; and president Gordon Lowell. The Board also approved for membership vote a proposal to add two seats to the 10-member Board, dedicated to members from industries related to seafood. AFDF will now poll its voting membership; results are expected before the March Board meeting.

THE COST OF IMPORTS: The U.S. imported 16 MM lbs. (worth \$30-32 MM) of surimi & surimi-based products from Japan in '82. Estimates show '84 imports may total 85 MM lbs., worth \$165 MM. The U.S. can't export pollock surimi (or products) to Japan until the Japan Fisheries Agency sets import quotas for U.S. product—a move sternly resisted by most Japanese interests.

AFDF estimates for every 5¢/lb earned by U.S. fishermen from joint venture-caught pollock, the U.S. loses 75¢ to the U.S.-Japan trade deficit. Overall trade imbalances between the U.S. and Japan soared from \$19 billion in '83 to \$30 billion in '84, according to Business America. Meanwhile several Japanese trawlers were accused of underlogging bottomfish catches, and Japan's whalers' intent to harvest 400 sperm whales in '85 opposes the non-binding IWC sperm whale quotas. The Japanese industry has published an editorial promising that if the US imposes punitive measures (cuts fishery allocations, etc.) Japan will "respond with sanctions of their own...restricting imports from the country in question." The editorial called punitive fishery restrictions against Japan a "hostage situation." More on this complex and turbulent issue in The Lodestar.

SCANNING THE LODESTARS: Next issue of The Lodestar will take a close look at the AFDF surimi line. How is it working? What are the problems? Will this project open doors for other Alaskan processors? Most vitally, is it possible to produce consistent quality surimi on shore in Alaska? Also featured will be:

- * Joint ventures help or hindrance to U.S. hopes in the seafood industry?
- * New surimi-based products in America
- * Out of the crab shell and into the petri dish: an AFDF project will analyze surimi's functional properties as an ingredient in many foods.
- * Test your surimi savvy. A quiz.

Chart your Winter Lodestar's arrival late January.

IF YOU HAVEN'T GOT A HA'PENNY, THEN GOD BLESS YOU! And if you haven't got ten bucks, then heaven help you without your subscription to The Lodestar. Fact-filled, thought-provoking, less expensive than a speeding locomotive, The Lodestar is part of the AFDF perpetual motion machine: for every action there's a reaction, and the U.S. surimi industry is acting with tremendous force as this business builds. Keep track of it all—subscribe to The Lodestar for only \$10/year (\$15 foreign). Write to The Lodestar at the address below. If you have already renewed, then put this down and get back to work.

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