
the **LODESTAR**

Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation, Inc.

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THE LODESTAR UPDATE

November 5, 1986

"Everything is new. And we are living among events so singular that old people have no more knowledge of them, are no more habituated to them, and have no more experience of them than young people. We are all novices, because everything is new."

--Joseph Joubert

TOP NEWS: AFDF members and friends are invited to the annual membership meeting on Friday, December 5, 1986 at the Clarion Hotel in Anchorage. Topics on the agenda: directions for AFDF in 1987, a new project to study waste utilization, and other items of interest. Watch your mail or call AFDF for details. Please plan to be there.

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REFRIGERATED SEAWATER WOULD IMPROVE ECONOMICS, extend trip length for trawlers, but how does it affect surimi quality? New AFDF report shows RSW doesn't adversely affect surimi until after at least 60 hours in the hold, but many factors--temperature, salt content, pH, water contact--interact so it's hard to isolate specific effects. Studies continue; for copies, send \$3 to AFDF and request "Refrigerated Seawater and Surimi Production from Alaska Pollock."

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SURIMI PRODUCTS MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED in obtaining USDA approval are "non-standardized" (no specified list of ingredients). Restructured foods like nuggets may get nod from USDA more quickly than franks or other standardized products. AFDF's regulatory approval team is preparing for its Nov. 14 meeting with USDA, and hope to gain approval for use of surimi in restructured meats. USDA's primary concerns: 1) Quality standards for pathological microbes, and guidelines by which unacceptable products will be removed from shelves; 2) a voluntary inspection program for plants selling surimi to meat companies.

The USDA presentation team will report on its experience with the USDA in the November issue of The Lodestar. Look for it.

AFDF now is publishing a monthly newsbrief charting progress toward gaining USDA allowance for surimi. Want to be on the mailing list? Drop a card to AFDF.

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RE-FLAGGING ISSUE HAS SET INDUSTRY ABLAZE with controversy. Law now allows processors to re-flag foreign vessels with U.S. flags, and compete with higher-priced U.S.-built vessels. Domestic processors claim law gives foreign competitors an open door into domestic industry. Once vessels are re-flagged, they are given same advantages as U.S.-built vessels, but these fully-amortized ships are allowed to hire a percentage of foreign crew. Protestors ask, what's to keep foreign companies with U.S. fronts from competing in all U.S. fisheries?

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC), at its September meeting, called for "urgent and timely action" to promote legislation banning any re-flagging efforts after Sept. 29, 1986. And all Alaska's coastal municipalities have united to address the issue.

SURIMI GOES TO CAPITOL HILL: Howard Buysman, creator of surimi sausage for recent food shows, sent 20 lbs. of it to Capitol Hill in October as the Senate voted on imposing a tariff on imported surimi. Buysman sent the product to show members of the committee what the U.S. surimi industry was doing. Buysman also sent blocks of raw surimi because, he said, "What's really interesting about surimi is its feel. If it were grapes, we'd let them walk on it with bare feet."

THE HALLS WERE EMPTY and the meeting rooms packed at the Geneva Conference on New Products in October. AFDF acting exec. director Sharon Gwinn reports that participants sat forward in their seats while major attraction Gordon McGovern, CEO of Campbells, warned about Japanese inroads into food business, and the need for U.S. companies to be competitive from a global perspective. Others discussed the need to go beyond the numbers to achieve unique insight into consumer behavior. Gwinn said it was interesting to query food people about fish/surimi. Concerns centered around reliability of supply, and need for American suppliers.

ONE MAN'S WASTE IS ANOTHER MAN'S WAREHOUSE: Total utilization of fish is the subject of a project launched by AFDF and the Fishery Industrial Technology Center (FITC) in Kodiak, Alaska. The project will: 1) Characterize waste from different species through chemical and physical measurements; 2) study pollution caused by seafood waste; and 3) give waste utilization workshops. The scope includes unused material from cod and pollock fillet, crab, surimi, halibut and salmon processing. FITC director, Dr. Jong Lee, will explain the project at AFDF's Dec. 5th annual meeting.

AFDF STILL SEEKS PERMANENT LEADERSHIP: Call for an executive director was extended to November 15. The director works with industry and government to target key development opportunities, oversees foundation's progress in pursuing those opportunities, and secures financing. Job requires 10 years of experience in the food and/or seafood industries, the capacity to manage a number of integrated programs, the personality to be an effective liaison between industry and government, and the vision to develop a dynamic plan for AFDF's future. (A sense of humor wouldn't hurt, either.) Those interested should call Sharon Gwinn, acting executive director, at AFDF: (907) 276-7315.

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WORLDWIDE SURIMI ROUNDUP: China will buy pollock from N. Korea for at-sea surimi production. This is China's first over-the-side arrangement combined with surimi production. China was allocated 2,533 m. tons of U.S. pollock for 1986, and by the end of June had purchased 6,000 m. tons from U.S. joint venture fishermen. The Republic of Korea doubled its surimi trawler fleet since 1985; total surimi production will be 50,000 metric tons in 1986. Most of that goes to domestic markets; 25% is exported to Japan, and ROK exported \$248,000 worth of surimi to the U.S. in the first half of 1986.

HOKO FISHING CO. now is custom-making surimi for JAC Creative Foods aboard processor Chikubu Maru, then shipping directly via U.S. carrier to JAC. Japan Fisheries Assoc. had allowed the deal only if the North Pacific Fishery Mgmt. Council (NPFMC) didn't object; NPFMC decided the decision was outside its jurisdiction. Some say Taiyo, Nissui and Nichiro are considering similar arrangements now that precedent is set. What does this mean for domestic processors?

A SIGNIFICANTLY EXPANDED Alaska Pacific Seafoods surimi plant began fall operations Oct. 1, and in the first 21 production days, APS processed nearly 2.5 million lbs. rnd. weight into more than 580,000 lbs. of surimi and about 8,000 lbs. of fillets for an average yield of 23-24%.

Nearly 90% of the surimi was APS Grade A quality with high gel strength and a favorable moisture content. A new Myren (Norway) BP202 twin screw press dehydrator was added to the line alongside the Fukoku single screw press. Transit time in the twin-screw press is about 2 minutes; it produces a product compatible in mixing with product from the Fukoku press. Plant engineer George Morrell says an upcoming move to replace the Toyo 710 header/gutter with a Baader 184 will boost capacity to 400,000 lbs./day. The 184 handles pollock larger than 16 in. and heavier than 2 lbs.

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ASK ME ANYTHING about surimi, and if I can't tell you, I'll look it up in Surimi: It's American Now, a book encapsulating all surimi-related information AFDF has gathered over the last five years. The 300-page, easily updatable book will be published at the end of the year, and will sell for \$50. Order your advance copy, and pay only \$40.

"THE PRICE OF WISDOM IS ABOVE RUBIES," says the Bible's book of Job. Well, compared to that, The Lodestar is a bargain! Wise readers still have until December 31 to renew Lodestar subscriptions at the fantastically low rate of \$10 a year (\$15 foreign). Less wise but still sagacious readers who renew after Jan. 1 will pay \$20 (\$30 foreign). (Rubies will also be accepted.)

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