

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation
seeks processor for flatfish production

ANCHORAGE, AK -- An Alaskan seafood processor will have a chance to pioneer new opportunities in flatfish processing in a project sponsored by Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF).

AFDF issued a request for proposals on Aug. 10 seeking an Alaskan processor for a flatfish production contract that includes testing equipment, experimenting with value-added products and entering those products in the commercial food market.

The Alaskan bottomfish boom has brought an increase in flatfish deliveries, which can make up 5 to 10 percent of a typical bottomfish haul. AFDF's project will help processors increase profits from flatfish, and will also benefit small boat harvesters who aren't participating in the cod or pollock fisheries, but could profit from flatfish.

"We're looking for a processor who wants to be the first to test technology that will make flatfish production more efficient and more profitable, and to explore new product opportunities," said Mel Monsen, AFDF executive director.

Proposals must be received by AFDF by Sept. 21. AFDF will announce the successful bidder on Sept. 30, and equipment will be installed in October. Copies of the request for proposals are available from AFDF in Anchorage.

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The project calls for a 12-month production commitment in a plant open to both AFDF and the seafood industry. The selected plant also must arrange flatfish deliveries with Alaskan harvesters, and work with food industry buyers to develop and market value-added flatfish products.

AFDF will provide financial assistance, a full line of flatfish processing equipment valued at \$180,000, and equipment maintenance for three months.

The flatfish project is part of AFDF's long-term goal of developing a year-round, multi-species seafood processing industry that will increase profits to Alaskan processors and harvesters, and will create more stability in the state's seafood industry.

Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit research and development firm directed by the seafood industry to pioneer new seafood processing technology and product development. AFDF is funded by the National Marine Fisheries Service by import tariffs from foreign-produced seafood products.