



Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation, Inc.

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**Calling all fish processors:
"Symphony of Salmon" contest will debut non-traditional Alaska salmon products**

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA--For the past three years, new product development has been touted as the answer to Alaska's salmon woes. State, industry and private organizations have called for new, non-traditional products to break through market barriers that keep Alaska's salmon prices low and the nation's consumption of Alaska salmon minimal. But what new products have been created in those three years?

A group of fish organizations will sponsor an Alaska salmon product contest called "A Symphony of Salmon" to showcase non-traditional products made from Alaska salmon. A panel of chefs and celebrities - including Governor Hickel - will taste test each new product in early February at the Anchorage Museum of History and Art. They'll choose the three most promising new salmon products, and those will be highlighted at the International Boston Seafood Show in March, the world's largest seafood trade show, which each year attracts more than 20,000 seafood buyers worldwide.

"We decided it's time to get serious about new product and market development", said Paula Cullenberg of Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF), a co-sponsor of the contest. "Some companies have made significant strides in product development, but it's such a struggle to get new products on the market and make them known. So all the co-sponsors got together to give the industry's effort a boost."

The Alaska Department of Commerce and Economic Development and the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute will join AFDF in organizing and funding the contest.

"The first-prize winner will get an expense paid trip to the Boston Seafood Show as well as an exhibit booth", Cullenberg said. "A booth there normally costs \$6,000. So this contest is a meaningful benefit to the winner."

Cullenberg named a few of the salmon products new to the market that might be featured in the contest: salmon ham, smoked salmon spread, salmon nuggets and burgers, salmon chowder and a host of other products. But Cullenberg said this event won't accept ideas alone.

"The contest is open only to products that are now in commercial production", she said. "We expect the winners to go out and get a lot of orders for their products, and we need producers who can fill them."

The contest is part of an overall statewide effort to increase the value of Alaska's salmon, to expand its markets, and to create new demand for salmon that will increase the U.S. consumption. Interested producers of Alaska salmon products should contact AFDF in Anchorage for details.