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Customs Cracks Down on Illegally Labeled Chinese Shrimp Imports
SSA Grateful for Strong Enforcement of Trade and Food Safety Laws

Tarpon Springs, FL- The Southern Shrimp Alliance (SSA) applauds the significant efforts undertaken by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to prevent evasion of U.S. trade and food safety laws by Chinese shrimp producers. At the port of Los Angeles, CBP officials have stopped over 30 containers of Chinese shrimp illegally labeled as a product of Indonesia. Chinese shrimp are subject to a food safety "Import Alert" issued by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and antidumping orders issued by the U.S. Department of Commerce. However, by transshipping or improperly labeling products, Chinese shrimp have been able to enter the United States without necessary scrutiny and payment. Reports indicate that CBP will expand testing to ports nationwide.

Last month, the FDA reported that a shipment of shrimp exported from China but labeled as a product of Indonesia was refused entry because the shrimp was believed to be contaminated with banned veterinary drugs, including nitrofurans.

"CBP's efforts to address unlawful transshipment schemes over the last three years have been exemplary. SSA is grateful to the men and women of the CBP who have spent considerable time and effort protecting the American consumer and insuring that our trade laws are enforced," said John Williams, executive director of SSA. "The recent steps taken by the CBP's Office of International Trade and Office of Field Operations to prevent circumvention of U.S. laws will substantially reduce the incentive for importers to participate in transshipment schemes."

U.S. seafood importers have been unwilling or unable to address rampant circumvention of U.S. food safety and trade laws by Chinese shrimp producers. Three years ago CBP found that roughly \$60 million worth of Chinese shrimp had entered the country falsely labeled as a product of Indonesia— with approximately 50% of the volume of that shrimp imported by members of the National Fisheries Institute, according to CBP. U.S. import data suggests that transshipment of Chinese shrimp through Malaysia continue unabated.

"These schemes are only possible because our laws permit almost anyone to export shrimp products to the United States," stated John Williams. "U.S laws regulating the importation of shrimp, America's most popular seafood, should mirror those in place for imports of meat, poultry, and eggs."

SSA is an alliance of the U.S. warmwater wild shrimp fishery from eight states: North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. For more information on the SSA, please visit www.shrimpalliance.com.