



The Shrimp e-Advocate

Newsletter

January 2009

The Southern Shrimp Alliance (SSA) is a non-profit alliance of members of the U.S. shrimp industry in eight states committed to preventing the continued deterioration of America's shrimp industry and to ensuring the industry's future viability. SSA serves as the national voice for the shrimp fishermen and processors in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas.

Quick Links

[SSA Website](#)

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BREAKING NEWS

LA Times Looks at Melamine in Farm-Raised Chinese Seafood

Last month, 26 containers of shrimp, crawfish, tilapia and other fish from China were refused entry at U.S. seaports.

Inspectors cited a variety of reasons: salmonella, unsafe additives, unapproved drugs and labeling problems, according to FDA records on its website. However, FDA does not test seafood for melamine, which is used in feed by China's aquaculture industry.

The LA Times reports that laboratory studies of melamine-fed catfish, trout, tilapia and salmon by the FDA's Animal Drugs Research Center found that fish tissues had melamine concentrations of up to 200 parts per million. That's 80 times the maximum "tolerable" amount set by the FDA for safe consumption.

FDA's lack of ability to keep up with food safety issues was discussed in the article and can be read at:

<http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-melamine24-2008dec24,0,5133588.story?page=2>

LEGAL UPDATE

Indonesian Shrimp Producer Reacts to CBP Crackdown

In November, CBP officials at the port of Los Angeles stopped over 30 containers of Chinese shrimp illegally labeled as a product of Indonesia. CP Prima, an Indonesian shrimp producer, reportedly has seven containers detained based on laboratory tests that demonstrate the shrimp originate from China. The company reports that it is being asked to pay the 112.8% duty on the shipments. As a result of the CBP crack down

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on transshipments, CP Prima claims that it has diverted product from the U.S. market.

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.

Seafood Dealer Charged with Fraud

Another seafood dealer is embroiled in a mislabeling scheme and facing federal felony charges. The dealer is accused of labeling pollock and tilapia as more expensive walleye. The scandal is the latest example of a broad problem in the seafood industry that effects U.S. shrimp producers. Previous investigations by media outlets have found shrimp advertised as U.S. wildcaught shrimp in restaurants, such as Red Lobster, to be imported, farm-raised shrimp. This illegal practice has economic as well as safety issues for U.S. consumers. SSA has been working with multiple government agencies to address mislabeling of shrimp.

SSA Protects Antidumping Duties on Thailand

SSA continues to defend the antidumping duty orders on Thai shrimp imports, filing briefs and participating in oral arguments in December before the Court of International Trade.

On February 29, a dispute settlement panel of the World Trade Organization (WTO) ruled that the methodology used to calculate duties on Thai shrimp imports of shrimp violated international trade rules. As a result, the United States Trade Representative requested that the U.S. Department of Commerce recalculate the antidumping orders on Thai shrimp imports in a manner that is compliant with the WTO panel's ruling.

The preliminary results of the Department's recalculation indicate that the actual effect on the antidumping rate is minor for all but two companies. The deadline for the final results is April 1, but such results will likely be released sooner. The ruling does not apply to imports from Brazil, China, Ecuador, India or Vietnam.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

SSA Continues Efforts to Include U.S. Shrimp in USDA's Procurement Program

Since 2003, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has spent nearly \$155 million procuring seafood products for government programs like the school lunch program. For nearly two years, SSA has sought to work with the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service to have shrimp included in the commodity purchase program.

The USDA's programs are intended, in part, to assist domestic production of seafood. However, the single largest beneficiary of the government's purchases is an American subsidiary of Thai Union Frozen Products PCL, one of the largest exporters of Thai shrimp. Nearly 60% of the money spent on fish purchases, such as tuna, salmon and catfish, go to this Thai subsidiary while no U.S. shrimp fishermen benefit from the program. SSA will meet with government officials on this issue again in January.

Changes in Administration Effects SSA Issues

As President-Elect Obama takes the office in January, several changes will take place in the leadership of administrative agencies and Congressional Committees that govern issues that effect SSA. For example, Senator Daschle will become the Secretary of the Health and Human Services, which includes food safety issues. SSA looks forward to working with the new leadership and establishing new relationships through the transition.

REGULATORY UPDATE

Shrimp AP Meets in Houston on January 8

SSA will be attending the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Shrimp Advisory Panel meeting in Houston, TX on January 8, 2009. The Panel will be focusing on a range of issues, from Texas closures to the status and health of the shrimp stocks for 2007. There will be a report on the number of moratorium permits issued and preliminary effort estimates for 2008 given by Dr. Jim Nance followed by the Shrimp AP recommendations.

Comment on the Proposed St. Lucie Artificial Reef

SSA's Director of Field Operations Richard Vendetti has been talking with members about the proposal by the county of St. Lucie, FL to create a 3.0 square nautical mile artificial reef site located northeast of the Ft. Pierce Inlet. Concerns were raised during a comment period that the proposed offshore site is within an active shrimp trawling area. Please follow [this link](#) to a description and chart showing the proposed artificial reef sites as well as existing sites. If you have comments about the proposed artificial reef, please direct them to St. Lucie County Marine Resource Coordinator Jim Oppenborn, (772.462.1713), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers biologist Garrett Lips (561.472.8884) or Richard Vendetti (912.222.8796).

Happy New Year!

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Summary of December Board Meeting

The SSA Board held a very productive meeting on December 6-7 in Tampa, FL. The 2009 budget was approved and SSA officially moved to a calendar year accounting system from the October 1-September 30 fiscal calendar used since its inception.

The current status of ongoing litigation and regulatory issues were presented by Dewey & LeBeouf and Glenn Delaney. Imported seafood safety issues and defending the trade actions will continue to be a major focus in 2009.

There was also a decision to have Louisiana delegation host the annual shrimp boil in Washington, DC.