



The Shrimp e-Advocate

Newsletter

September 2008

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.

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BREAKING NEWS

SSA Helps Fund AOAC Research and Development of Multi-Residue Detection Tests for Banned Antibiotics and Pesticides

In cooperation with the Catfish Farmers of America, SSA is helping to fund the development of standards to be used to identify multiple illegal antibiotics and pesticides in imported shrimp and catfish. The research and development project is being coordinated by AOAC International, a non-profit, international, scientific organization. AOAC International was founded in 1884 as the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists. The organization was formerly part of the United States government and has created thousands of agreed upon, evaluated, and validated analytical methods, including the validation of rapid test kits for the detection of banned antibiotics in milk.

LEGAL UPDATE

Thai Antidumping Duties Announced

One full week before final antidumping duties on Thai exporters were to be provided for the second administrative review, Commerce announced significant reductions in the antidumping rates assigned to Thai shrimp. Specifically, the Rubicon Group was assigned a rate of 3.77%, Pakfood was assigned a rate of 2.44%, Thai Union was assigned a rate of 2.85%, Thai I-Mei was assigned a rate of 3.09%, and all other Thai exporters were assigned a rate of 3.18%. Thai Union won a massive reduction in the preliminary rate assigned to the company (previously 15.3%) after Commerce was lobbied by the Thai government and Thai Union.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Senator Vitter Criticizes WTO Ruling against Continuous Bonding

Senator Vitter criticized the recent improper World Trade Organization Appellate Body decision against the enhanced

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continuous bond program. The decision threatens trade relief that the U.S. shrimp industry obtained to address dumped shrimp imports from Thailand and, more broadly, the ability of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to collect antidumping and countervailing duties on unfairly traded imports.

In an August 8 [letter](#) to Department of Commerce Secretary Gutierrez and Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Basham, Vitter requests that the U.S. Department of Commerce thoroughly consider all available options for capturing the full magnitude of dumping of Thai shrimp and that the CBP devote careful attention to addressing the massive problem of under collection of assessed antidumping and countervailing duties. The agencies are to report back on progress by November 1.

SSA thanks Senator Vitter (LA) for his determination to ensure that U.S. trade laws are defended and antidumping duties on imported shrimp are vigorously enforced.

Houston Chronicle Editorial Highlights FDA Problems

The [Houston Chronicle's August 22nd editorial](#) says that FDA's reliance on Chinese assurances and private labs to test imported seafood endangers consumers. The Editorial Board is rightly appalled that FDA blindly has outsourced its responsibilities to test for dangerous chemicals on imported shrimp, a point SSA has repeatedly made to elected officials and regulatory bodies in an effort to bring the U.S. food safety system up to the same standards as other major consuming countries.

REGULATORY UPDATE**Council Improves Offshore Aquaculture Plan at SSA's Request**

SSA representatives attended the recent meeting of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. In direct response to SSA's recommendations, the Council adopted two important improvements to their Offshore Aquaculture Plan. First, the Council added a new requirement to use Electronic Logbook data on the shrimp fishery under the criteria for siting aquaculture facilities. The second measure would require NMFS to provide written notice and a public comment period when considering offshore aquaculture permit and siting applications. These two measures are intended to prevent offshore aquaculture facilities from being located on important shrimp fishing grounds.

In a previous move by the Council (also based on SSA's

request) brown, white, pink and royal red shrimp have been removed from the list of eligible species for offshore aquaculture.

Fishing Effort Down, Catch per Unit Effort Up in 2007

The Gulf Council also received scientific updates on the status of the Gulf shrimp stocks and fisheries. While shrimp fishing effort in the Gulf is substantially down for all three species, catches of brown and white shrimp have been relatively high compared to long-term averages. Pink shrimp catches are below the historical average. In all cases, catch per unit effort in 2007 was well above historical averages and near historical highs.

SSA Raises Concerns over BRD Decertification

SSA has filed comments on the NMFS Proposed Rule to decertify the Expanded Mesh and the Gulf Fisheye BRD designs that do not meet current BRD certification criteria including the requirement to reduce finfish bycatch 30 percent by weight.

SSA raised numerous concerns regarding specifics of the Proposed Rule and overall BRD policies and requirements. SSA has requested that the decertification process be suspended and that NMFS perform a new, updated bycatch practicability analysis to determine if current BRD requirements exceed and are thus inconsistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

New Blacknose Shark Stock Assessment Surprising

NMFS has announced a surprising new stock assessment and scoping process that finds blacknose shark is overfished and overfishing is occurring, and that 30-62 percent (44 percent annual average) of the fishing mortality of this species is due to shrimp trawl bycatch in the Gulf. An additional 4-7 percent of such mortality is attributable to shrimp trawl bycatch in the South Atlantic. This finding triggers an aggressive fishery management response under new Magnuson-Stevens Act requirements to end overfishing and rebuild overfished stocks. This potential management response may have profound implications for the Gulf and South Atlantic shrimp fisheries. SSA will be very active in evaluating the scientific basis of the stock assessment and the development of any regulatory response.

WASI UPDATE

WASI Media Coverage Continues

Wild American Shrimp - even without any supporting advertising - has secured placements in several of the top culinary and restaurant trade magazines this month, appearing in the August issue of The National Culinary Review (magazine of the American Culinary Federation) and the Summer issue of Flavor & The Menu. Also, Wild American Shrimp secured an upcoming article in Restaurant Business, which will feature an interview with Eddie Gordon and Concentrics Restaurants - an Atlanta-based restaurant group that uses certified product in all of its restaurants.

On the consumer media front, Wild American Shrimp continues to go strong, building of its momentum from coverage in large daily newspapers across the country over the summer months including July's Atlanta Journal-Constitution and June's Toledo Blade by now working on a story with The New York Times due out before the end of the year.