

Testimony of Nicole Dubberly
Shrimper and Marketing Consultant
Before the United States International Trade Commission
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Good morning. My name is Nicole Dubberly. I am a shrimper and marketing consultant. What started as my grandfather's hobby nearly forty years ago has grown into Dubberly's Seafood, a family-owned and operated business in Savannah, Georgia. My grandfather, Frank Dubberly, manages the company's day to day operations. My grandmother manages the company's retail shop. My father and uncle are both captains of two company-owned boats. My brother and I serve as crew members on my dad's boat, and my mom and I work together on marketing the company's branded product, Sweet Savannah Shrimp.

My desire to enter the shrimp industry began in college. Unsure of my major, I enrolled in a marketing class. I remember my professor explaining how imports impact American industries and his experience working with shrimpers. It clicked. I realized that if I had a marketing degree, I could be helpful to the industry and the family business.

The antidumping orders have helped stabilize the market and allowed Dubberly's Seafood to explore new markets and marketing techniques. Prior to the orders, prices were extremely low and few consumers knew the difference between wild-caught domestic and imported shrimp. Since the orders, prices have begun to rebound. Customers are not only receptive to learning the differences between domestic and imported product, but also willing to pay a premium for quality local shrimp. My marketing efforts on behalf of Dubberly's Seafood are focused on educating consumers about these difference and selling the company's product through higher-end markets, such as farmers' markets and food co-ops.

The response so far has been very positive. Dubberly's Seafood began attending local farmers' markets nearly two years ago selling Sweet Savannah Shrimp. Given customers' enthusiasm for the product, the company expanded into Atlanta-area farmers' markets. Sweet Savannah Shrimp has become so popular that our customers have started requesting shipments during the farmers' markets' off-season. Numerous emails and calls from our customers requesting Sweet Savannah Shrimp have prompted Dubberly's Seafood to begin shipping Sweet Savannah Shrimp directly to customers. We used to sell a vast majority of our shrimp to processors at the wholesale level. However, with an emphasis on direct marketing, the company's sales have grown through farmers markets and now represent 10 percent of overall sales. In addition, nearly 20 percent of our sales are made at our retail store.

I am excited about the prospect of growing our direct sales further. But these sales still represent just a small amount of the shrimp our family's boats land. Developing new marketing efforts requires an investment of both time and money. Stopping the price declines that accompanied the influx of imported shrimp allowed Dubberly's Seafood to explore new markets and invest in developing new ways to sell.

Without the antidumping duties, we would face very difficult challenges. Imported product would once again increase downward pressure on prices and prevent Dubberly's Seafood from further exploring new markets – all of our focus would be on cutting costs in order to retain even the smallest profits. I ask the Commission to please keep the orders in place. I will be more than happy to address any questions you may have. Thank you.