



SOUTHEASTERN FISHERIES ASSOCIATION

H O T L I N E S

O C T O B E R 2 0 0 6

SFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO MEET DECEMBER 7, 2006

A semi-annual Board of Directors meeting will be held at the Hampton Inn in Titusville on December 7th. Attendees will be arriving on December 6th for a seafood extravaganza at DIXIE CROSSROADS Restaurant. The meeting will start with a closed session from 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM and then the meeting will be open for our speakers and other members who care to attend. Cost for the event will be \$100 per person which includes dinner at Dixie Crossroads, breakfast at the Hampton Inn and a box lunch at noon. Subject will include increased wholesale licenses, trip ticket law enforcement, agricultural or other designation for water front seafood businesses and updates on backdoor sales and product substitution among other subjects. We have 20 rooms reserved at the Hampton Inn for the night of December 6th on a first come first served basis. The meeting is open to all members. A registration form will be sent out shortly.

HACCP TIP OF THE MONTH

Check your water supply and ice for cleanliness and make sure you have a

This newsletter is published by Southeastern Fisheries Association. Please pass it along and encourage others to be added to our mailing list.

If you want to be removed from the list, please contact us.

SFA is a non-profit association founded in 1952, charged with maintaining a viable seafood industry in the Southeast.

Robert P. Jones, Editor

quality report from the entity supplying water at your facility as part of your HACCP PLAN.

“Legionnaires ‘disease in on the rise, warns Dr. Janet E. Stout, PhD. This respiratory infection is caused by a bacteria most often found in the water distribution and air conditioning systems of large buildings and cruise ships. More than 20,000 cases occur nationwide each year. About one-quarter of those inflicted die. Symptoms, high fever, cough; headache and diarrhea are similar to those of other illnesses so the disease may go untreated until it is too late for antibiotics to work. Self-defense: If you experience symptoms and recently have been in a hospital, hotel or on a cruise ship, ask to be tested for the disease. (Janet E. Stout PhD, is microbiologist at Pittsburg VA Healthcare System and research assistant professor in the School of Medicine at University of Pittsburgh.)

CALLS FOR ONE FOOD AGENCY INCREASING

Senator Durbin of Illinois has filed a bill calling for combining all the agencies that monitor and inspect the nation’s food supply into one major federal agency in order to improve the safety of the nation’s food supply. The turf wars that will rear their ugly heads from this proposal will be monumental. And while the regulatory agencies do a good job under separate rules, regulations and policies, there are still many areas where oversight is minimal. The *Center for Science in the Public Interest* has been among those calling for a single food agency. This

organization has been very militant against eating raw oysters and has supported the overly zealous recommendations of the EPA concerning the consumption of seafood.

In our part of the world, no agency seems interested in the fact that very large, gravid female king mackerel are routinely caught by the thousands during big money king mackerel tournaments and sold on the US market. Everyone knows these particular sport caught king mackerel contain levels of methylmercury 2 and 3 times that allowed by the FDA. Maybe a single agency would have the ability to keep these large mercury laden fish off the market and thereby protect people who could be harmed by them.

GULF COUNCIL MEETING IN NOVEMBER VERY IMPORTANT

At the present time nobody knows the particulars in a Secretarial Plan for red snapper, but most people in the industry feel the red snapper TAC will be cut by at least 1 million pounds. There have been lots of trips to DC by a variety of people to meet with Dr. Hogarth and his boss concerning the enormous impact on the fisheries if the TAC is reduced to the point some of the environmentalists want.

There are many, not in the industry who would like to shut the fishery down for many years and maybe allow a 5 million pound TAC but, that would be indefensi-

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ble by the government.

There are also those, including several Council members, who would like to shut down as much of the shrimp industry as they can, but they too are not being realistic. They say it is the shrimpers fault but fail to even consider the increased number of charter boats, party boats and anglers fishing for red snapper over the past 30 years.

Hopefully the Council will look at all information available and leave any personal agendas, likes or dislikes at home. No fisherman, commercial or recreational should ever be managed by whim or some hidden agenda. Hopefully everything will be put on the table. SFA will be satisfied if the Council abides by the **Rule of Law.**



KUDOS TO FLORIDA RESTAURANT & LODGING ASSOCIATION

The Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association distributed a very well written and researched flyer at the recent SYSCO Food Show in Tampa. The flyer listed all the laws pertaining to product substitution and urged their customers to report any issue where they feel the product bought was not what they received. Southeastern Fisheries has always felt the first line of defense against product substitution was a strong educational program for all restaurants. This flyer is a good first step to move an educational program forward.

VIETNAMESE BUSINESS MAN WANTED IN FLORIDA RELEASED

A Vietnamese businessman wanted for product substitution and other charges pertaining to bringing tra (catfish like species) into the US and then selling it for grouper will not be sent to Florida to face criminal charges. A Belgium

judge ordered his release after being held in jail for 133 days. He returned to Vietnam. The product substitution case was made by the US Department of Justice and wanted the Vietnamese businessman extradited to the US to face the charges against him.

An effort to stop wholesalers, retailers and restaurants from selling catfish-like imports as grouper continues. Within a short time the state and federal agencies will have additional DNA tools to determine the species of fish sold to consumers. This practice has a very negative impact on domestic seafood harvesters and gives those selling fish under a fake name a big advantage in the restaurant trade.

If you feel you have been sold a substitute species of fish, please call SFA at 850/224-0612 or fax 850/222-3663 and the information will be passed on anonymously to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

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