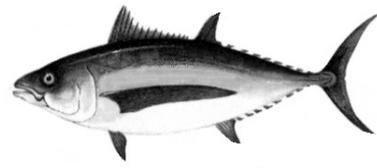


WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION ©



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Members:

November 1, 2014

About a month ago Pacific sea temperatures began to decrease while weather conditions in the NW grew worse, thus ending the 2014 coastal albacore tuna fishery. As we transition into the off-season there remains looming international and federal management issues that need to be addressed as well as improving local albacore consumption by domestic consumers. These newsletters serve as a resource to get information to the members concerning issues that may affect their operations now and in the future.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Dues 2015: WFOA sent 2015 dues invoices in early October even though dues are not due and payable until January 1, 2015. We certainly appreciate those who pay early. You can pay WFOA dues by check, cash, credit card, and Paypal. If you have a Paypal account just log in and use wfoa@charter.net to send the payment to. Paypal can be linked to your bank accounts or credit cards.

E-mail Delivery of this Newsletter: WFOA has about 150 members receiving this newsletter by e-mail now. If you wish to be on the email list let us know and you will not receive a hard copy. You can request both. The card in your dues invoice can be returned with your preferences.

Member Meeting at Expo: Members are invited to attend the WFOA informal meeting on Wednesday, November 19th 1:00PM - 4:00PM at Pacific Marine Expo under the stadium at Century Link Field. See the enclosed notice.

AFRF Fee Note: WFOA was recently made aware that a buyer has been deducting AFRF and MSC fees from vessels proceeds. Our contracts read that the AFRF buyers pays the fees on all fish bought. WFOA put out a request that members selling there should check their tickets and see if they had deductions. We would like to know if any others fall under this problem. Some may be a misunderstanding of the AFRF collections of fees.

MARKET & PRICES:

North Pacific Season 2014: The U.S. North Pacific albacore catch in 2014 began in late June as water warmed rapidly along the Oregon coast and into Canada. July and most of August had excellent catches in numerous areas along the coasts of Oregon and Washington. Good catch with light effort was also reported through July off Vancouver Island. The Canadian catch stayed fair too good and was very good late into September off the Queen Charlotte Islands. A few albacores were caught off SE Alaska. Very little albacores were reported in Central and Northern in California. Total catch for the summer could be as high as 15,000 tons. Canadian catch is hard to determine yet as fishing was good but effort may have been down early. Markets in both Canada and the U.S. kept effort suppressed somewhat by logistics of waiting to unload in few available docks and ports for most of the season.

Pac Fin Data: As of October 29th Pac Fin data shows a total of 13,019/ st landed. WA - 8,935, OR - 4,075, CA - 9. As mentioned above this is not final. I expect it to increase to around 15,000/st when all the numbers are counted. This does not include about 1,000 tons of U.S. fish landed in Canada.

Markets: This was the predominate issue through the season. Prior to the season in April and May there were signs of problems when boats returning from the South

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Pacific had little luck in selling their albacore at promised prices. Canadian buyers did buy most if not all of the SP albacore but prices to the vessel were about 20% lower than what was indicated when boats departed south. Boats ended up receiving somewhere around \$3,100 to \$3,400/st. When the catching began in the North Pacific in June it was very uncertain where the market would go. WFOA had information that Spain would not enter the market for anything more than \$2,000/st and even at that price would not have much volume. There remained good markets for iced/fresh however.

Once the season began there was no brine frozen price established. Fortunately Wildplanet Foods stepped in suddenly and established a \$2,300/st price saying they had adequate market. Wild Planet ended up probably buying the largest percentage of the catch and needed more at the end of the season. Other companies began finding orders in Spain and elsewhere as the season progressed, and at the end it seemed most needed more fish. Unfortunately, some of the buyers in Spain and elsewhere reacted to rumors of price drops generated locally and backed out of some of those orders. Wildplanet Foods is continued to buy brine steadily all season. The problem was they had only a few docks to unload and created backups.

Prices for Brine/Unbled began at \$2,300/st, and \$2,380/st for Brine/Bled. On August 5th the price was adjusted at \$2,200/st and \$2,250 - \$2,280/st. The brine-bled market which has been showing promise in the past few seasons was nonexistent this season. Iced/Fresh prices started above \$1.50/pound but now are in the \$1.10/pound range depending on location and demand.

Markets for blast frozen albacore remained challenging all season with some interested buyers looking but not purchasing. Some blast fish has been sold at brine and brine/bled prices which has not happened since 2006 when blast dipped lower than brine at one point. Early season blast /frozen prices were around \$3,200/st but as fish was landed the prices went down. Some companies had no markets especially in Canada where the large Sockeye Salmon season took a lot effort out of buying albacore.

The unstable market is partially the result of oversupply of albacore. This situation restricted U.S. vessels' ability to unload in a timely manner in some cases. Good landings in Canada and earlier in Japan have filled the regular markets for the higher end blast frozen at sea albacore. There is also data showing

higher catches by China and others adding up to the highest catches worldwide in at least 10 years. Domestically there also have been some problems with quality from some vessels that hurt the overall market.

However, despite some negatives the overall 2014 appears to be a very good season for tonnage landed and with the new domestic markets and expansion of other new markets the future should be positive. Salmon, Shrimp and Albacore catches have been very good in 2014 for domestic fishermen and processors on the west coast.

MANAGEMENT & REGULATION:

South Pacific and Fishing: Very few vessels appear to be headed to the SP this season because of fish prices and expenses. There is some concern in the fleet that U.S. trollers fishing on the high seas in the SP will come under new potential catch and effort controls. The recent Tokelau agreement on South Pacific Albacore apparently has been finalized. The last draft dated July 2014 is confined to longline albacore and sets quotas (not clear if it is in terms of vessel days or metric tons) for each country's EEZ. Nevertheless, every time this subject comes up at WCPFC certain island states, PNG, Solomon Islands, New Zealand, talk about closing the high seas. It will not happen this season with no time to put regs into effect but it is something WFOA, AAFA, and AFRF will have to be continually vigilant in our efforts to maintain our small sliver of access in remote regions of the South Pacific Ocean.

The U.S. fleet has a good record historically in the SP albacore troll fishery. Even though in the past 10 years effort has ranged from 5-15 boats per season we must not forget that for a number of years we had 20-55 boats in the region, many of them smaller boats. Landings primarily were made in American Samoa directly, or onto refrigerated carriers which WFOA placed human monitors on both the ship and at the unloading site. Some seasons produced more than 5,000 tons of albacore especially in the 1990's. A pestering problem is fisheries regulators and management personnel forget this and U.S. trollers get constantly swept up in the longline albacore issues that occur primarily around the Pacific Island Nations. Thus, we have to keep reminding them at almost every management meeting internationally to keep from being eliminated from South Pacific troll fisheries.

Canada Treaty: 2014 ends the first year of the 3-year phase out of the fishing regime and access to each countries waters. It will be suspended in 2017 unless

fisherman request a continuation. As the date gets closer more discussion will take place regarding the future of the regime if any.

Until 2017 U.S. Vessels wishing to fish in Canadian waters pursuant to the treaty must register with NMFS at least seven days prior to the first planned day in Canada by contacting NMFS at (562) 980-4024 or email albacore.fish@noaa.gov, as well as contacting Tofino CG prior to entering. Additional requirements and instructions can be found in the Guide for Complying with U.S./Canada Albacore Treaty.

Forty-five (45) Canadian Vessels are allowed in U.S. EEZ, and a historical number U.S. Vessels in Canadian EEZ. An application to Enter Canada Ports for service, unloading, crew transfers, maintenance, fueling, etc. has to be filled out and approved. U.S. vessel for services access to Canadian ports ends on Dec 31st each year. <http://tinyurl.com/mvy4pvg>

Foreign Crew - The U.S. government still has not moved an inch on this issue in 2014. Some ports especially on the coast are much better accommodating U.S. crew issue than inland Puget Sound districts. This issue still needs to be resolved as there are only two years left on the treaty regime which allows U.S. vessels to pick up crew in Canada as well as discharge them. Regardless of what happens to the treaty at the close of the 2016 season, U.S. fishermen need to be able to pick up and transfer foreign crews in an efficient manner in U.S. ports. It is not an easy solution given the new ISIS, Ebola, domestic shooters etc. all in the spotlight now, but WFOA needs to keep the pressure on. The U.S. State Dept. quit issuing crew visas about three years ago and has not answered or given updates on that status as of yet.

Ad-Measuring - This we have been told by the USCG last spring is pretty much a dead issue to pursue. The USCG says the policy was set in stone in 19th century England and is the standard still.

Large-Mesh Drift Gillnet Control Date - Open for Public Comment: By November 28, submit your comments on the selection of a control date for the large-mesh drift gillnet fishery that targets swordfish and thresher sharks. NOAA Fisheries and the Pacific Fishery Management Council are considering whether and how to establish a federally managed limit to participation in this fishery. <http://tinyurl.com/ot5mpop>

MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL: WFOA and AAFA combined certificates this year and WFOA has by the combination been also included in South Pacific albacore troll fishery. The following buyers signed MSC agreements with WFOA this season and pay the \$10/st fee of which ½ goes to MSC costs and the other ½ is designated for Public Outreach and Management support;

Bornstein Seafoods
Ilwaco Landing LLC
Jessie's Ilwaco Fish Company
Manabe & Co. LLC
Pacific Choice Seafood Company
Pacific Coast Seafood
Pacific Seafood Group
Trident Seafoods Corp
Wild Planet Foods Inc.

There were some MCS brine markets that opened up this season for some of the buyers.

NOAA Fisheries Releases Fisheries of the U.S. 2013

Each year, NOAA compiles key fisheries statistics from the previous year into an annual snapshot documenting fishing's importance to the nation. Inside the 2013 report, you'll find landings totals for both domestic commercial and recreational fishing by species. This information allows us to track important indicators such as annual seafood consumption and the productivity of top fishing ports.

Key highlights from the report include:

U.S. commercial fishermen landed 9.9 billion pounds of seafood valued at \$5.5 billion. An increase over 2012, (2.5% up for landings and 7.6% up for revenue). Landings, poundage and value continue to remain near record highs and higher than the average of the preceding decade (9.2 billion pounds valued at \$4.3 billion).

Dutch Harbor, Alaska and New Bedford, Massachusetts remain the top commercial fishing ports. Americans consumed 14.5 billion pounds of seafood in 2013 essentially unchanged from 2012. The U.S. continues to rank as the third largest consumer of seafood in the world after China and Japan. Recreational catch increased in 2013. More than 9 million anglers made over 71 million trips and caught 380 million fish, 61% of which were released.

PUBLIC OUTREACH: WFOA over the past five seasons has been pursuing projects to promote local albacore to the domestic consumer. We have worked alongside others such as the Oregon Albacore Commission (OAC), retailers such as Whole Foods, New Seasons and others, as well as local processors, distributors, restaurants, and those with new innovative approaches to selling albacore tuna in all forms.

In the past most albacore was canned by major canners and generally overseas. The domestic albacore consumption has shown a slow steady improvement with custom cans and value-added products that spotlight the local albacore enhanced flavor and texture. We still have along ways to go.

2014 brought us a large shift for brine frozen albacore into the domestic retail market. We now need to do more for the blast frozen loin markets in the months to come. There will be inventory and it should be used domestically after access to fresh/iced albacore dwindles.

Blast/Bled Issues: WFOA and Oregon Albacore Commission recognizing the issue with the blast/bled markets and the continued prices fluctuations will be discussing ways to get more albacore sold locally through the winter while there is supply and may be pursuing some forums and other gatherings to try to find a way to promote and make this market what it should be.

With new markets domestically for brine frozen and iced albacore suddenly increasing, more emphasis can be directed toward the blast/bled market. We need to get some heads together over the winter to better address this issue as more boats expand into the blast/bled fishery. It seems little attention gets paid to the blast/bled albacore market when it has been good but if we look at history this segment has had large up and down movement in prices in short times periods.

WFOA will be soliciting and welcome any input and participation on this from fishermen, processors, consumers, and others so we can try to do more. Some issues we may want to address:

- Research what buyers and those holding inventory want us to do. This is important as they hold the inventory and we need to be careful to keep promotions and information generic and do what helps them the most at this time.
- Take part in media or food events. Retailers with truck/frozen winter sales. Superbowl, X-mas etc...promote with crab.

- Fresh vs Frozen at Sea needs to be addressed further as a great way to have albacore available year round.
- Research as to where the albacore is stored and if it will be accessible. The promotion should be only for US caught albacore.
- Continue to counter negative Radiation and Mercury media reports. Need well written eye-catching info sheet to distribute to consumers, restaurants, media, physicians, etc. one pager to the point
- Social Media and Web from all organizations have coordinated uniform message - Quality, Available, Health, Eco-Friendly, MSC, Local, etc . . .
- Recipe contests

WFOA over history has not involved itself as much with blast frozen as fishermen tended to establish their own market and niches. But we certainty can help expand the local market in a number of ways and try to get a better grasp on the market and ways to find stability.

Major West Coast albacore supplier gets Lusamerica distribution partnership for retail expansion - Undercurrent News - October 13, 2014 - Jeanine Stewart - Sustainable Pacific albacore fisher McAdam's Fish, whose fleet of eight boats set out to offer something new to the market three years ago, is going head to head with well-established likes of yellowfin and bigeye tuna as it works to make inroads into US retail fresh cases. See Story and Links To video At: <http://tinyurl.com/pcg5s9r>

Wild Pacific Albacore: Web & Social Media Links

Websites:

www.wfoa-tuna.org	Association Site
www.PacificAlbacore.com	Consumer Site
www.afrf.org	Science Site

Facebook:

W i l d P a c i f i c A l b a c o r e :
www.facebook.com/pages/Wild-Pacific-Albacore

Twitter: @PacificAlbacore

Constant Contact E-Blast Monthly: WFOA does monthly e-blast articles on Constant Contact, anyone wishing to be on the list let us know at: wfoa@charter.net

New Members:

F/V Miss Tiffanie Kris Melling Ast/West

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