

Report from Tasmania (Finally)...

Hello to all,

Firstly an advanced hello to any directors that I am yet to meet and thank you to Anne for taking my directorship on board again!

Some noteworthy events...

Sea taste

The Wooden Boat Festival is held biannually in Tasmania's south, taking over the Hobart docks for 4-6 days. The event attracts boat owners and enthusiasts alike from both interstate and overseas. This year, for the first time, a focus on seafood and industry was included in the event. This section was called 'Sea Taste'. All local industry sectors from both wild catch and aquaculture were invited to partner up with a local restaurant to provide product at a discounted rate and to also setup their own stall in an industry marquee. After a huge initial response many backed out due to lack of understanding of how the event would work and without any assurance that it would be a success many felt it held too great a risk for them. In the end 7 industries were represented:

- Salmon
- Trout
- Scallops
- Oysters
- Rock Lobster
- Wild Catch
- Abalone

Each restaurant sold well in excess of their initial estimates of product requirements and there was good general interest in the industry marquee although many stalls agreed that an increased sensory experience will better suit the event in two years. As a first for the Wooden Boat Festival the organisers were pleased with the response from patrons and partly attributed the increase in visitors to the addition of the sea taste. The event attracted over 75,000 visitors this year.

Seafood Directions 31st October 2007 – Hobart

A reminder that Seafood Directions is this year held in Hobart.

Beacon Foundation

Beacon Foundation is an organisation that fosters communication between schools and local industry and has created a number of programs such as ready to work, no dole and polish. www.beaconfoundation.net.au

I am looking to pilot a programme introducing seafood into school cooking classes. Obviously I am starting with salmon. Pending the results we get this year I would like to assist the Beacon Foundation with launching the program statewide linking local seafood producers with school. And then hopefully nation wide. Education is the most important tool we have in promoting our products and if we can start this process at school age children we will set the wheels in motion for an attitudinal shift that will span generations. The program is in preparation mode still but it is envisaged that Huon Aquaculture will supply enough salmon throughout the year for each cooking class to spend a full session on salmon and the health benefits associate. Initially I will spend some time with the Teachers to equip them with the information, knowledge to prepare for the class some work sheets outlining the recipe to be taught, the health benefits and how they are connected to our body and also the various parts of our body that can be assisted by omega-3's. I'm very excited with the premise of this pilot program and hope that we can introduce other seafood species and companies into schools in coming years.

Brand Tasmania

Brand Tasmania has been a great tool for networking and pushing the Tasmanian brand as a marketing leverage tool for local business. Their support has assisted many in the seafood industry by providing free seminars on relevant issues and assisting many with funding opportunities that may not have been known about prior.

Sydney Fine Food Show – Royal Sydney Show

This year an Aquaculture component was included in the Food show, however a poor number of entrants meant only the shellfish section was properly represented. Only two salmon companies were represented this year however it is hoped that an increase in participants next year will give the competition more creditable results that may be further used for marketing purposes.

Seafood Training Tasmania

Recently STT gained some funding to put them in a position to offer some pre-employment training courses to better equip those wishing to enter the seafood industry with some knowledge and skills to assist in their application for employment.

Web: <http://www.seafoodtrainingtas.com.au/>

Great Seafood research results

www.seafood.net.au

I highly recommend anyone who is not on the mailing list to join up for the free emails. Often very relevant information can come through that will assist in some way.

Women in Fisheries/Aquaculture scholarship

http://www.frdc.com.au/tenders/rural_women.php

Interesting link

<http://www.seafoodsite.com.au/health/default.htm>

In conclusion,

I'm really looking forward to the year ahead and see our state hosting Seafood Directions as a highlight of the year ahead. I also look forward to hopefully meeting those that I'm yet to meet at the conference. My challenge I've set myself this year is to try to spread the wings of the Tasmanian Chapter to other females in the industry and am looking to the University Aquaculture dept to assist in this regard. Our member base in the state is tiny compared to the females that I have met that are working or studying in the industry so fingers crossed I can forge some new relationships through networking opportunities this year and contacts!