

# FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

NEWS

## CONTENT

Southeast Asian journalists visit Québec

TAFT 2012 – Innovation-inspired research presented by scientists from some fifteen countries

2

Canada and the European Union seek to control the seal population

3

2012 North Shore Biofood Forum

Fish and seafood exports to East Asian countries

4

The end of the 2012 fishing season is an ideal time to reflect on the future of the commercial fisheries and aquaculture in Québec and establish the priorities that will guide this industry for the next few years.

This is precisely what the Gulf of St. Lawrence northern shrimp industry chose to do just recently by inviting the principal industry players to a conference inspired by the theme, *The challenges of a responsible fishery*. François Gendron, Deputy Premier and Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, took the opportunity to speak to the representatives of companies and organisations interested in the development of Gulf of St. Lawrence northern shrimp. These companies and organisations are established in Québec and the Maritimes

as well as in Newfoundland and Labrador, or are connected to First Nations' communities. The minister applauded the stimulating initiative this conference represented and informed participants that he would not fail to read over the conclusions of their meeting so as to better accompany the industry in Québec as it accomplishes its future projects.

On December 13 and 14, the Minister will be visiting the maritime regions of Québec in the company of Jeannine Richard, MNA for Îles-de-la-Madeleine and the Minister's Parliamentary Assistant (fisheries component). He will meet with regional commercial fisheries and aquaculture stakeholders on the North Shore, Magdalen Islands and Gaspé Peninsula. Since each region faces its own unique challenges, the Minister

feels it important to speak with stakeholders in their home communities to find out what they have to say and to discuss priority issues with them.

Furthermore, next December 18, François Gendron will attend a day-long consultation that will bring together leaders and key protagonists from the commercial fisheries and aquaculture sector in Québec. Participants will reflect together on the issues facing the industry and on the best actions to take over the course of the next five years to assure the industry's sustainable development.

It goes without saying that these activities will encourage industry players to work together, and foster the emergence of new ideas for the benefit of the economies of Québec's regions.

## SEA CUCUMBER PROCESSED FOR THE FIRST TIME ON THE GASPÉ PENINSULA

By Michelle Parent,  
Gaspé Peninsula Regional Directorate  
Jean Paradis and Ann Provençal, Merinov

Something new in the processing industry! On September 3, 2012, Poissonnerie de Cloridorme inc. became the first plant on the Gaspé Peninsula to process sea cucumber.

Poissonnerie de Cloridorme specialises in processing cod, Greenland halibut and Atlantic halibut. The Gaspé Peninsula firm intends to diversify the products it offers and process sea cucumber from the Grand-Vallée to Cap-des-Rosiers area by making the most of the facilities and equipment it already owns.

It is estimated that several million pounds of sea cucumber have been harvested in Québec in recent years and shipped directly to Maine and New Brunswick to be processed there. Poissonnerie de Cloridorme intends to take advantage of some of this sea cucumber volume to experiment and development ways to process this little-known species. The outcome of its initiative could lead to the beginning of commercial production using quotas harvested in Québec.

Fisher Mathieu Girard supplies the raw material. Currently, the sea cucumber fishery is an exploratory activity and the species can be harvested from September 1 to October 25, using a dredge towed behind a fishing vessel. The dredges used in Québec are lighter and more compact variations of the ones developed in the United States for the sea urchin harvest.

A team of 20 to 25 individuals is required to manually perform the various steps required to process sea cucumbers. Particular attention has to be paid to the raw material so as to obtain the best yield and a quality finished product. Once the animal has been eviscerated, the internal body wall is cleaned and then placed on a slanted work surface. The orange-coloured flesh is removed using an adapted scraper before being vacuum-packed and frozen. Next the tegument (external body wall) undergoes a heat treatment before being dried. One of the major production challenges lies in mechanising some of these operations to increase efficiency.

The range of finished products the company wants to offer will be tested on the Asian market. Since this is a very demanding market, stringent quality criteria will be applied very carefully throughout the production process. Sea cucumber will be processed to varying degrees in different forms: whole frozen, frozen meat and dried skin.

For the processing industry on the Gaspé Peninsula, this project will serve to expand production by harvesting an usual species and developing new products and new markets.

Poissonnerie de Cloridorme obtained \$237,400 in financial aid from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food to carry out its project, which required a total investment of nearly \$600,000.

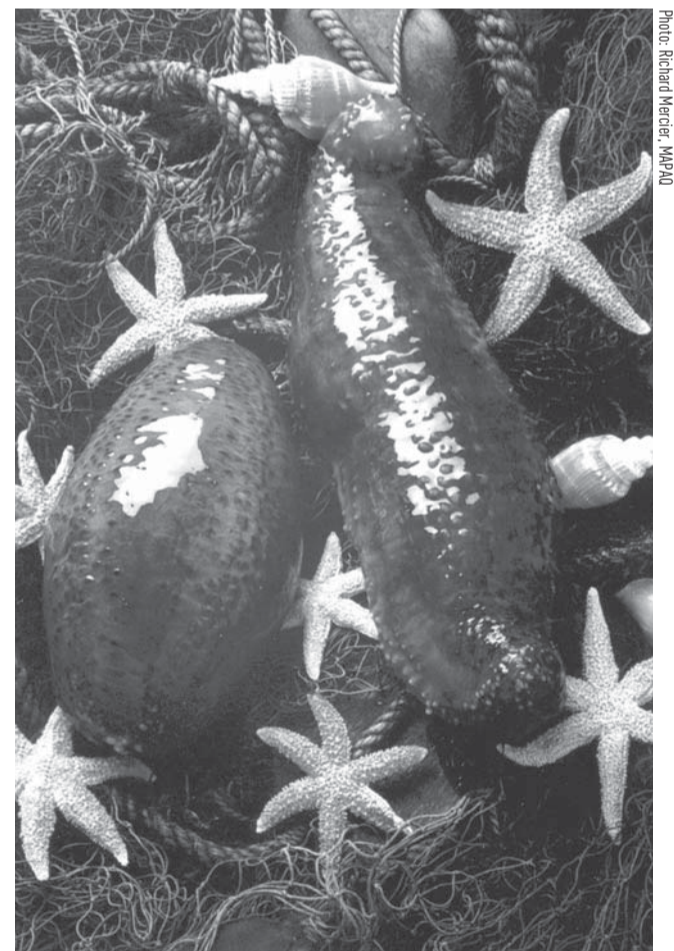


Photo: Richard Mercier, MAPAQ

### PUBLISHED BY

Le ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation  
Commercial Fisheries and Aquaculture General Directorate  
96 Montée de Sandy Beach, Suite 2.05, Gaspé, Québec G4X 2V6  
www.mapaq.gouv.qc.ca

Coordination team: Donald Arseneau, Micheline Côté, Micheline Fournier,  
Jean Lavallée, Richard Morin, Rabia Siga Sow, Louise Therrien.

Graphic design: Azentic

FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE NEWS is published bimonthly  
as an insert in Pêche Impact.

Québec 

## FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE NEWS

# SOUTHEAST ASIAN JOURNALISTS VISIT QUÉBEC

By **Françoise Nicol**,

Analyses and Policies  
Directorate

In Québec City last October 25, the Association québécoise de l'industrie de la pêche (AQIP) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPAQ) welcomed six journalists from several countries in Southeast Asia who work for food-sector magazines. This visit took place as part of a host mission organised by the Government of Canada in collaboration with Québec and Ontario.

The delegation was composed of representatives from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. In response to their interest for Canadian fish and seafood, Xueyan Chen, International Affairs Advisor at the MAPAQ's Foreign Market Development Directorate, gave a brief presentation on the Canadian industry. Then,

AQIP director, Jean-Paul Gagné, drew a comprehensive portrait of the industry in Québec. During the visit, the MAPAQ's Commercial Fisheries and Aquaculture General Directorate offered a sampling of products provided by businesses in Québec. The guests particularly appreciated the northern shrimp, snow crab legs, lobster products, whelk and Stimpson's surfclam.

This activity is in line with the guiding principles of the Ministry and the industry, which seek to gain greater visibility for Québec's marine products. It is to be hoped that the favourable perception of our seafood products will be transmitted to the readers of these magazines and that new doors will open to markets in these countries.



Photo: Éric Labonté, MAPAQ

From left to right: Françoise Nicol of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPAQ), Xueyan Chen of MAPAQ, and Jean-Paul Gagné of the Association québécoise de l'industrie de la pêche. Then, also from left to right, the members of the Asian delegation: Trifitria S. Nuragustina from Indonesia, Amy Van from Singapore, Marilen Fontanilla from the Philippines, Gowri Ratnasingam from Malaysia, Irin Rerksasarn from Thailand, and Minh Phan Le (Le Minh) from Vietnam. Simon Mercille of MAPAQ and Ada Rodriguez of Agriculture and Agrifood Canada complete the group.



By **Julie Boyer**,

Gaspé Peninsula Regional  
Directorate

In late October, as Hurricane Sandy was wreaking havoc along the American Eastern Seaboard, 130 scientists from some fifteen countries did their utmost to get to Tampa, Florida to attend the 4th Trans-Atlantic Fisheries Technology Conference (TAFT). These scientists are some of the most active in the aquatic product processing sector, and they shared the results of their most recent work with TAFT participants. The few highlights that follow give readers an idea of the innovative work being done the results of which could be of interest to members of Québec's seafood processing industry.

Like their Canadian counterparts, scientists in New Zealand are studying the prevalence of *Vibrio* bacteria in the marine environment, which could be increasing spurred by global warming. Researchers at the New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research have confirmed a slight increase in the occurrence of *Vibrio*, but have not established any evidence of the risk due to *Vibrio* pathogens likely to cause digestive infections in people who have eaten insufficiently cooked seafood.

Representatives of the Norwegian centre, SINTEF, presented a new 3D technology application designed to sort pelagic fish by size. This application offers greater precision than the commercial sorters currently being used for this important processing step.

Members of the National Food Institute at the Technical University of Denmark unveiled a surprising possibility proposed in response to a request from the Danish industry, which is seeking a rapid technique – one that can be used while production activities are underway – to measure the percentage of glazing on frozen shrimp. Basing their work on the fact that falling ice and falling frozen shrimp do not create the same sound, the researchers have shown the potential of acoustical measurement to determine the percentage of glaze.

In Iceland, the Matis research centre examined temperature distribution in containers used to ship fresh fish by sea and showed that shelf life can be improved by modifying the configuration of palettes and by adjusting the way operations are controlled. Their recommendations will no doubt find interested users since Icelandic firms today choose to ship 40 percent of their fresh fish by sea compare to only 2 percent 15 years

## INNOVATION-INSPIRED RESEARCH PRESENTED BY SCIENTISTS FROM SOME FIFTEEN COUNTRIES

ago; this change was made possible through better control of the cold chain and by taking advantage of the lower cost of sea shipment compared to air transit.

Portugal's Institute of the Sea and the Atmosphere (IPMA) presented an integrated approach used to analyse the risks and benefits associated with the consumption of seafood products in various area of the world.

It is also important to mention an endeavour by seven American research centres that recently posted a website ([www.seafoodhealthfacts.org](http://www.seafoodhealthfacts.org)) to improve access to scientific information about seafood consumption for health professionals and the general public.

For this fourth edition of the event, TAFT showcased the joint efforts of three major groups of scientists associated with research and development centres and the industry: the Atlantic Fisheries Technology Conference, Seafood Science and Technology Society of the Americas and the West European Fisheries Technologists Association (WEFTA).

Finally, it is important to point out that three scientists were presented with important awards in recognition of their remarkable contributions to the seafood

processing sector. Thomas Rippen, of the Seafood Extension Service at the University of Maryland, was presented with the prestigious *Earl P. McFee Award* for his achievements which have helped to improve business competitiveness, product safety and processing processes. George J. Flick, of Virginia Tech, was presented with the Seafood Science and Technology Society's *Lifetime Achievement Award*. Finally, Javier Borderias, of the Instituto du Ciencia y Tecnologia de los Alimentos y Nutrición in Madrid, received the *WEFTA Award* to salute his exceptional contribution.

To consult the presentation abstracts, visit the conference website at <http://www.taft2012.org/>. For more information, please feel free to write to [julie.boyer@mapaq.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:julie.boyer@mapaq.gouv.qc.ca).

### Upcoming events:

**The 64th Pacific Fisheries Technologists Conference, inspired by the theme *A sea of opportunities through science*, will be held from February 10 to 13 in Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico.**

## FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE NEWS

# CANADA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION SEEK TO CONTROL THE SEAL POPULATION

By Simon Mercille,

Analyses and Policies  
Directorate

Last October, two news items, apparently similar in nature, led to a vociferous reaction from partisans and critics of the seal hunt. In fact, the European parliament and the Canadian Senate adopted measures to control the seal population, the goal being to preserve fish stocks.

The European Union decision to cull part of the seal herd has taken a number of people by surprise. In fact, the embargo on seal hunt products imposed in 2009 was based essentially on arguments associated with the fight against animal cruelty. This unexpected support from the European parliament occurred after fishers and aquaculturers in Scotland, Finland and Sweden had expressed their concerns. In fact, the latter fear that the huge numbers of seals will undermine

the profitability of their industry in the long term, given the species' predation of fish stocks.

This decision is decried at the same time by two unlikely allies – animal rights groups and Canadian sealers. The former do so for their usual reasons focussed on animal welfare while seal harvesters' associations are denouncing the unfair treatment and hypocrisy shown by the European Union with respect to the seal issue. In fact, imposing an embargo on seal products for animal cruelty-related reasons on the one hand and permitting a cull to contain the population on the other hand certainly sends a mixed message. This curious position will inevitably be mentioned when the European embargo is contested

by Canada and Norway before the World Trade Organisation.

As for the recommendation made by the Canadian Senate, it is an economic development argument and complies with the principles of sustainable development adopted by both the federal and Québec governments. Its implementation would permit sealers to cull some 70,000 seals over four years, but it is also anticipated that the cull would reduce pressure on cod stocks, whose recovery is now two decades in the waiting. It is important to point out the grey seal cull would not endanger the species in any way since its population has grown from 13,000 individuals in 1960 to more than 330,000 in 2010.

It is also important to point out that the seal hunt practised in Canada is recognised by several groups of veterinarians as a cruelty-free activity. The application of the three-step killing method (stun, check, bleed) used here causes the animal minimal suffering. The seal hunt is thus no more objectionable than the techniques and methods used at commercial slaughter-houses.

These two news items are encouraging for the seal industry. The European Union decision gives seal industry defenders more arguments and the Canadian Senate recommendation could have positive repercussions for the fisheries sector in Québec.

## 2012 NORTH SHORE BIOFOOD FORUM THE NORTH SHORE IS OUTSTANDING FOR ITS PRODUCTS

By Marthe Kleiser,

North Shore Regional  
Directorate

The third edition of the North Shore Biofood Forum was held on November 6, 7 and 8, 2012 in Baie-Comeau. Restaurateurs, producers and processors had the opportunity to get together, learn, and discuss the issues affecting them.

The North Shore once again excelled at showing the quality of its products. For over two days, the 120 participants enjoyed products exclusively derived from the region's agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture. The menu featured shrimp and seafood, salmon, lamb, rabbit, mushrooms, vegetables, pastries, berry jams and jellies, Labrador tea... The organising committee hopes to make the Forum a model for other events in the region.

Another innovation this year: the Forum earned distinction as an eco-responsible event by joining forces with the Conseil Régional de l'Environnement de la Côte-Nord and attaining BNQ Level 2 certification. This concern for the environment is indicative of the agrifood industry's desire to become more ecologically responsible.

### Knowledge and innovation

This year's theme explored *Setting a course for knowledge: A beacon for the future*. Several speakers gave presentations on this topic. For instance, Janita Gagnon, of Pêcherie Manicouagan, spoke of the need to innovate to keep

businesses in the seafood processing industry competitive.

Françoise Beaudet, of En pratique, dealt with the need to build better ties with one's clientele and to identify their needs more closely. As for Denis Hamel, he spoke about his organisation, FERME – Fondation des entreprises en recrutement de main-d'œuvre agricole étrangère –, which helps companies recruit foreign workers to offset the labour shortage experienced by sector businesses. Then, Éric Tamigneaux, of the Centre d'études et de valorisation des algues marines, discussed the excellent future prospects of algae. In the area of marketing, Nancy Portelance of Plaisirs Gourmets, a firm specialising in the distribution of fine cheeses in Québec, insisted on the pressing need for business partners to adopt a more positive attitude and build greater mutual trust.

### Builder of the Year and Enterprise of the Year awards

The *Builder of the Year* award was presented to Gilles Gagnon, executive director of Crabiers du Nord inc. for his remarkable contribution to the North Shore marine product industry throughout his career. Examples of his many achievements include the development of a tremendously successful range of canned products – whelks and Stimpson's surfclams – that are available to all Québec consumers.

The aquaculture firm Fermes Belles Amours inc. was rewarded for its efforts



**BUSINESS OF THE YEAR:** From left to right: Lillian Lavallée Dumas (Fermes Belles Amours), Christine Brisson (Vice President, CRÉ Côte-Nord), Serge Dumas (Fermes Belles Amours), Denis Picard (Chair, Table Bioalimentaire Côte-Nord)

**BUILDER OF THE YEAR:** From left to right: Jacynthe Gagnon (Fédération UPA Capitale Nationale Côte-Nord), Gilles Gagnon (Les Crabiers du Nord), Alain Côté (Manager, DRCN MAPAQ), Christine Brisson (Vice President, CRÉ Côte-Nord), Denis Picard (Chair, Table Bioalimentaire Côte-Nord)

as *Business of the Year*. Faced with the difficulty of reaching markets elsewhere in Québec with its fresh products due to its geographic location, the company – in operation on the North Shore for over 20 years – has stepped up its efforts and successfully turned to the processing of mussels, whelks, and lobster for long shelf life in jars.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food was once again proud to be

associated with this activity that fosters networking between the various industry stakeholders and uniquely showcases the North Shore's products and biofood businesses.

For more information, all the Forum presentations can be consulted on the website at <http://tablebioalimentaire-cotenord.ca/>

# FISH AND SEAFOOD EXPORTS TO EAST ASIAN COUNTRIES

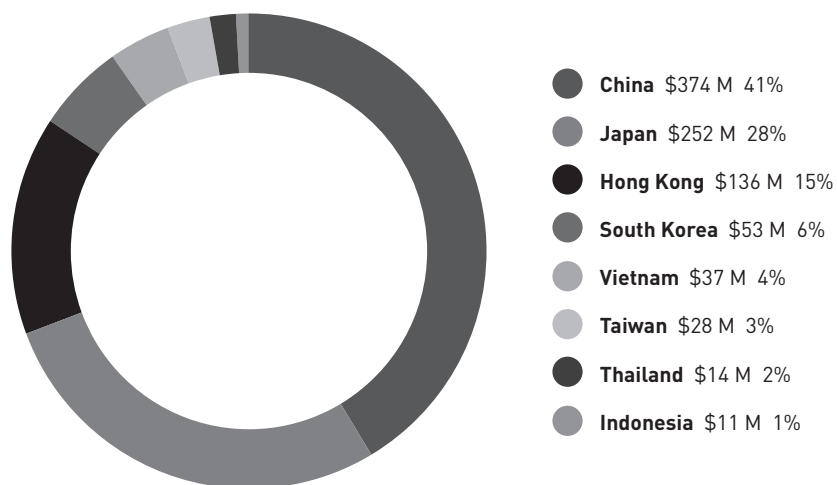
By Françoise Nicol,

 Analyses and Policies  
 Directorate

Fish and seafood exports from Canada to countries in East Asia are growing rapidly. In fact, in 2011, Canadian exports to China, Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Vietnam, Taiwan and Thailand totalled more than \$900 million, an increase of 28 percent from 2010.

For Canada on the whole, China has become the primary destination for fish and seafood, since nearly 9 percent of exports – valued at \$374 million – were shipped there in 2011. It is followed by Japan with \$252 million and Hong-Kong with \$136 million.

## Canadian exports to Asia in 2011



In eastern Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador is the most active province on markets in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. New Brunswick is in first place for exports to Japan while Nova Scotia leads with its exports to South Korea.

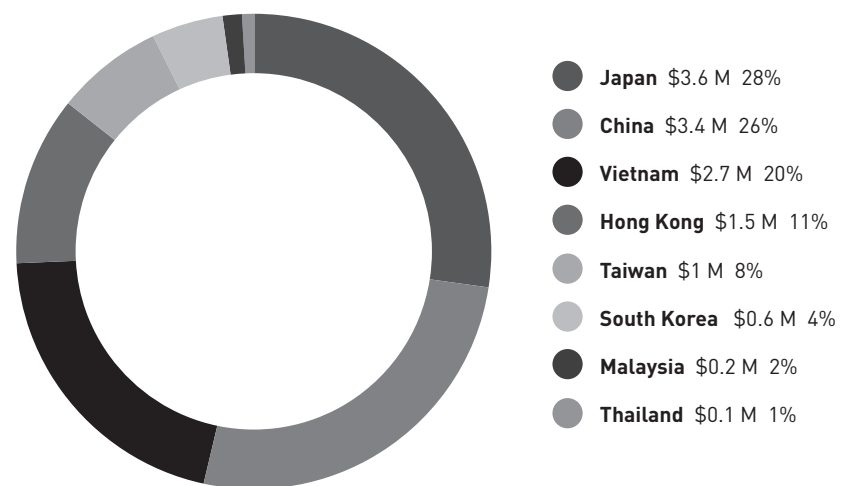
As for Québec, the value of its exports to Asian destinations totals \$13 million (equivalent to 5.1% of Canadian exports).

Japan continues to be the primary destination of Québec marine products heading to that part of the globe; fish and seafood with a value of \$3.6 million were shipped there in 2011. However, this is a drop of 19 percent from 2010. China is the second destination for Québec fish and seafood, with exports of about the same value as those shipped

to Japan, \$3.4 million. But in the case of China, this represents a remarkable increase of nearly 50 percent from 2010 to 2011. If Hong Kong is included with China, nearly 37 percent of our fish and seafood shipped to Asia are now consumed there.

The most significant growth in sales for Québec occurred in South Korea (523%), Taiwan (330%), Hong Kong (130%) and Vietnam (86%). From 2009 to 2011, sales to these destinations taken together grew by 53 percent. Compared to the Atlantic provinces, Québec's share of exports to Vietnam was the highest, accounting for 7.2 percent of Canadian exports to this country

## Québec exports to Asia in 2011



Changes in consumer habits and the growing wealth of Asian consumers promise interesting commercial prospects for the coming years in terms of coldwater fish, generally reputed for their quality. It is important to point out that *per capita* fish and seafood

consumption is currently 14.7 kilograms; this is expected to grow to 35.9 percent per inhabitant by 2020. This means promising markets for a number of Canadian and Québec products such as snow crab, lobster, molluscs, Greenland halibut, etc.



## SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

Québec adopts the world trend.

Find out why!

[www.mapaq.gouv.qc.ca/ecocertification](http://www.mapaq.gouv.qc.ca/ecocertification)