



Commercial Fishing Community Fights Hunger in Skagit County

Mt. Vernon, WA – January 23, 2006 – On Wednesday, January 25th, the local commercial fishing community will provide delicious seafood meals to men, women and children in need from the Mt. Vernon community. Fishing families are joining with the Skagit County Community Action Agency for this lunch being held at the Skagit County Fairgrounds.

Member companies of the At-sea Processors Association (APA), supply the meals as part of the organization's *Community Catch* program supporting hunger relief. Working in partnership with local non-profit SeaShare, APA companies provide more than one million seafood meals annually to local and national food assistance programs.

Volunteer hunger relief efforts are critical in Skagit County, which has the highest number of homeless per capita in Washington State. Last year, a one day survey identified 1,200 homeless people in Skagit County, including 300 children. Nationally, the US Department of Agriculture reports that hunger was prevalent enough in 3.9 million American households in 2003 that someone in the family skipped a meal because they could not afford enough food. The USDA report indicates more than 284,600 households in the state of Washington alone were not able to access enough food to meet basic nutritional requirements.

“Seafood donations are particularly important because fish is such an excellent source of protein,” said Tuck Donnelly of SeaShare. “APA’s *Community Catch* program helps boost the nutritional resources of local and national food and hunger programs.”

“APA members are committed to being good stewards of the environment and good neighbors at home,” said Kevin Duffy, Executive Director of APA. “We work to ensure the sustainability of fish resources, and it is important to our members that our harvest is shared with those in need in our home communities.”

Join us Wednesday, January 25th from 10:00am – 3:00pm at the Skagit County Fairgrounds. Individuals will enjoy a lunch of crab stuffed salmon fillets, mashed potatoes, dessert and beverages made possible by Anacortes-based Alaska Ocean Seafood (an APA member) and the Skagit County Community Action Agency. For more information, contact Karen Tarica at 206.369.0855.

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About the At-sea Processors Association (APA) - APA represents U.S. catcher/processor vessels that participate primarily in the sustainably managed Alaska pollock and west coast Pacific whiting fisheries. Both fisheries are among the largest food fisheries in the world. Processing our catch at sea allows us to produce the highest quality seafood products. Visit www.atsea.org for more information.

About Alaska Ocean Seafood - The Alaska Ocean Seafood is an independent, family-owned and operated company with generations of experience in the fisheries of the North Pacific and Bering Sea. The company is based in Anacortes, WA. Visit www.alaskaoceanseafod.com for more information.

About SeaShare - SeaShare, a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing the critical supply of fish products for hungry people throughout the United States. For more information about SeaShare visit www.seashare.org.