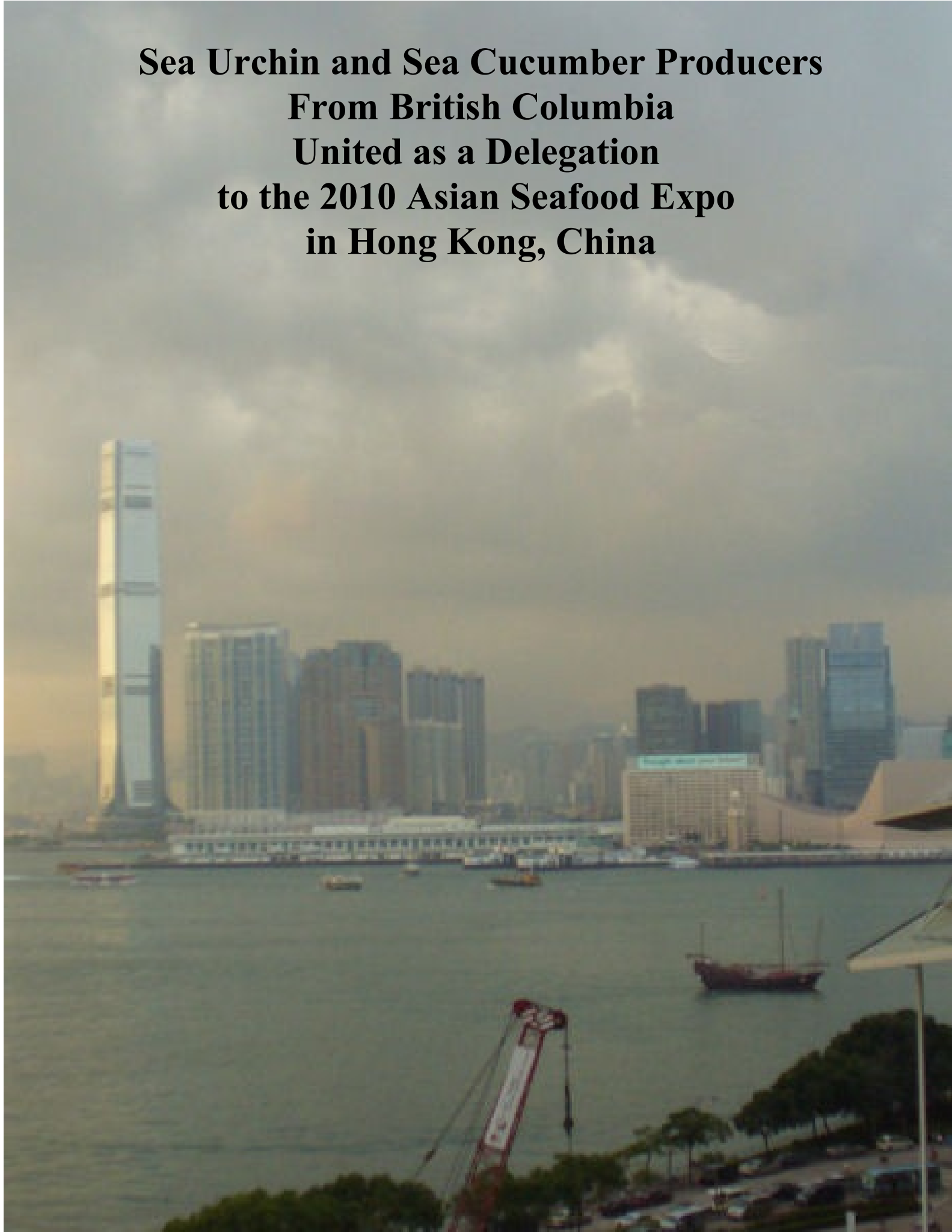


**Sea Urchin and Sea Cucumber Producers
From British Columbia
United as a Delegation
to the 2010 Asian Seafood Expo
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September 7-9 2010

BC Fishing Delegation visit to the 2010 Asian Seafood Expo (ASE), Hong Kong

Figure 1: Delegation Members (from left to right below):

Paddy Wong Gary Grant David McRae Leslie Li (from Oceanethix (Hong Kong))
Mike Featherstone Tim Joys Alfa Wong Ken Ridgway Pat Fantillo Geoff Krause



Francis Cheung from Grand Hale Marine Products Ltd. was intending to join us on the trip but was unable to follow through because the record return of Fraser River sockeye salmon this year required his continuing presence at the plant.

The Pacific Urchin Harvesters Association, the Pacific Sea Cucumber Harvesters Association and the West Coast Green Urchin Association were represented on and by the delegation. This report is an account of the mission findings and meetings and the show results.

Journal Record

Friday September 3: All delegates travel to Vancouver to catch early AM flight to HK.

Saturday Sep. 4: Mike, Tim, Dave, Gary, Paddy, Alfa and Geoff fly Cathay Pacific CX889 to HK and arrived in Hong Kong at ~ 0600 hrs. Sunday Sep. 5. Ken made his own way a couple of days earlier while Pat flew on an Air Canada flight that left about an hour previously.

Sunday Sep. 5: We all met up, checked into Wharney Guang Dong Hotel and toured about town for the rest of the day.

Monday Sep. 6: We went for a tour of the Kowloon electronics market and met Paddy's brother-in-law for lunch. In the afternoon we found our way over to the show venue and located and started to inspect the booth and booth equipment and start organising the booth materials. The television and DVD players had not yet arrived so we got things to a point where we were comfortable and reconnoitred the route options back to the hotel.

We had arranged to tour the live hold facility at Oceanethix and meet with Leslie Li and the team the company has assembled to discuss potential of live held RSU as an unexploited and unrealized market opportunity. The preferred product form for many seafoods in China is live as this historically has been the only way to have a guarantee on quality. Refrigeration has been largely absent in China until recently and many consumers still fall back on this tradition. Even restaurants will often have a bank of aquaria holding fish and other seafood (Figure 2) that customers can then witness being plucked live from the tank.



Figure 2: Aquaria holding live fish and other seafood items within a restaurant in Hong Kong.

Oceanethix has developed a system of holding fish and other freshwater and marine organisms alive using tanks set up inside a warehouse in the logistics district of Kowloon. The company is based in Australia but it is setting up this operation to serve Hong Kong and is building another in Shanghai. Their facility occupies the 17th floor of a warehouse in the Kowloon logistics district (Figure 3). Oceanethix is still setting up their facility and had only a single tropical module, holding live coral trout, working.



Figure 3: Warehouse where Oceanethix live-hold system is located.

The company website

<http://www.oceanethix.com/index.htm>

provides considerable information on the company, the technology and their vision. In summary, their technology for seafood is based on a modular design whereby they use clean fresh water which is made into an idealized seawater which is circulated at about 10-15 l/minute through a system comprising a holding tank (~ 8 ‘ diameter by 4 ‘ deep), sedimenting tank, active upflow sand-based bioactive filtration (for nitrates and ammonia), ozone-ation tank for complete sanitization of the water and pressurized oxygenation using a 12 foot tower with injectors on the bottom. The system is essentially “closed” as water is rejuvenated by the system so it can be recirculated indefinitely and need not be replaced. The conditions in each module are controlled with regard to temperature, salinity and other water quality parameters so each module is essentially a self-contained artificial holding habitat held in isolation from all the other modules in the facility.

This is to prevent the outbreak and spread of

any disease problems throughout the whole system. There are also some other isolation options so fish displaying signs of infection can be separated.

The fish are fed and kept vigorous within the facility and any that are damaged by harvest or subsequent handling are allowed to heal and rejuvenate for a couple of weeks prior to being sold to restaurants etc. This removes pressure from the sellers to move the fish as fast as possible, lest they die in the interval, and provides additional pricing power to the seller as all product can be held for some weeks until it can be sold in premium condition. The same strategy is to be applied to urchins so they can be rehydrated and refreshed in the facility prior to sale.

Once we finished the tour of the Oceanethix facility, we continued to drinks in a 30th floor bar overlooking Victoria Harbour opposite the Convention Centre from where we could witness the nightly light and laser show. This show uses downtown high-rise building lights in a possibly coordinated and choreographed show lasting about 10 minutes. It was a good show. Following

this we moved to a sushi restaurant reportedly interested in obtaining live sea urchin through Leslie's company where we had a great meal and further discussions on how things might develop for this new market. Leslie wants to work as directly as possible with the fishermen and/or fishing association(s) as middlemen may interfere at what is for them opportune times to disrupt and hold to ransom a competing distribution network when it is still small and vulnerable. He understands that the established processors have substantial infrastructure and market connections in place which cannot be summarily excluded and shut down but he wishes to work as independently from their influence as possible to reduce the risk(s) of their direct and possibly intentional interference. As the business develops further there should be room for their participation, if only because of the scale they can bring to the project as demand and subsequent production requirements mount.

Leslie acknowledged the 30% tariffs imposed by China on any live product imported into China from international suppliers but also maintains that by having a corporate presence in China proper allows his company to move live product from their Kowloon facility into China without attracting the tariff(s) because of a free trade agreement between Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China (PRC). If this is true it is possible that the development of effective pre- and post landing and transport holding technology(ies), methods and protocols could open up PRC as a developing market with very little competition and therefore immense pricing and revenue potential. This assumes of course that Chinese consumers in PRC take to the live urchin taste wise in a manner similar to Chinese consumers who have tried it in Steveston, British Columbia. Leslie is very enthusiastic in this regard, in part because live seafood and fish are such a prized product form in China. It is to their mind the ultimate value-added form and very much preferred to any other form and this is the basis of their business strategy. He has also tasted processed and fresh uni and while he dislikes the former he finds the latter "live" product extremely tasty and feels there will be no problem marketing it as it starts catching on.

As a word of caution, it should be noted that the facility as viewed in Kowloon comprises only a single operating module at this time although another one appears close to completion. They also do not apparently have a heat exchange or refrigeration system in place that would allow them to reduce the water temperature to the 5-10°C considered suitable for temperate species. They were anticipating having something in place by early October but are apparently relying on cold-room (dry-refrigerated) storage at this point for cold water species. The sales proposition as presented to us was also a bit thin. They appear to be relying on word of mouth as preliminary marketing efforts are, while tightly targeted, limited to smaller outlets such as individual sushi restaurants. They may have more extensive plans but these were not fleshed out beyond the vision stage to us.

Just to follow up a bit here, as soon as we returned to BC, contact was made with local experts in this field. Consultations with Westwind Sealab Supplies, a company which has been providing live urchins to research labs around the world since at least the mid-1980's, confirms that a major challenge with the live trade is that the urchins are pretty sensitive to handling. They are actually very susceptible to damage when getting bumped around, especially when they are out of the water, probably because their mesenteries get torn. Of some note here is that excessive mortalities are a problem every time they get animals from commercial fishermen reflecting perhaps the shortcuts employed by fishermen so they are more efficient in the sense of moving volume. They have found that when a box or a bag comes out of the water and gets

dropped on deck, it guarantees about 85% + mortality. These are not immediate deaths, but within a week or at most 10 days, They also get mortalities in their system that are probably associated with their trays getting bumped as they are taken in and out of the tanks. This points fairly definitively to a need within the commercial fleet for specialized extra-careful harvesting and handling techniques for the live trade, something we have yet to get a better handle on.

Given that the mortalities are not immediate, assessing the suitability of various transport options for a live market for food would depend on what sorts of intervals are involved. Longer and even indefinite holding times will logically require the most intensive option. After quite a bit of testing, Westwind ships their urchins submerged in oxygenated water. Because the shipment then comprises only 1/3 product and 2/3 water plus container, this increases shipping costs considerably. It is however a necessary measure which ensures the product survives for more than a couple of days. Other California suppliers which don't use this method provide a product which is substantially inferior, at least for scientific use, and which expires much sooner. Mr. Li also enquired whether any shipments had tested the use of MS222, an anaesthetic commonly used to keep fish calm during transport. Two issues of note here are that MS222 is thought to act on the central nervous system (i.e. brain), an organ which urchins lack, and the use of MS222 renders the product unsuitable for human consumption in some countries, including South Korea, because of potential health implications. Both these issues warrant further examination prior to committing to its use.

Tuesday Sep. 7

The show floor opened in the morning for exhibitors and the full Canadian delegation attended to put the finishing touches on the booth. Frozen sea cucumber meat and dried and frozen sea cucumber skins and trays of chilled sea urchin uni were set up in the display freezer (Figure 4). Pamphlets, brochures and business cards were set out around the booth so they could be picked up by passers-by and the DVD/TV was setup to play a selection of videos showcasing the various fisheries, the products produced and some of the dishes produced by chefs using B.C. urchin and cucumber products. Posters were hung on the walls of the booth and a couple of roll-up banners borrowed from the Province were set up (Figure 5).



Figure 4: Display of sea cucumber (left) and sea urchin (right) in freezer.

There was some criticism of one of the posters as being too busy and showing imperfect product (Figure 6). Their compliance with Brand Canada guidelines was also questioned so some reworking of the posters prior to attending the 2010 China Seafood Expo in Dalian at the beginning of November is warranted. The Pacific Sea Cucumber Association proposal has not yet been approved by AAFC so they are pretty much off the hook in this regard at this point while the Sea Urchins From Canada group should make a few changes.



Figure 5: The BC Sea Urchin and Sea Cucumber Associations' booth at the 2010 ASE.



Figure 6: Poster which attracted criticism.

Once the physical parts of the booth were set up to everyone's satisfaction, we discussed some of the other materials that should be on-hand. This includes a checklist that can be used for packing up in preparation for the show. Items on this list include: staplers, paper towels, scissors, double-back tape (for posters etc), trays, business card holders, pamphlet holders, plastic models of product(s), windex and any give-away items that come to mind. Having a book to collect business cards and write accompanying comments so the information can be properly catalogued afterwards also turned out to be a brilliant idea. A copy of a page filled out is attached to illustrate (Figure 7).



Figure 7: Filled in page from sea urchin contacts record book.

With regard to the brochures, pamphlets and videos (DVD's), Chinese Japanese and English versions should all be available. As a matter of simplicity, perhaps 2/3 - 3/4 should be in the host country language, in this case Chinese, while the other languages can comprise the balance. The reasons behind this are so some of us uni-lingual English guys can figure out what is actually on the pamphlets and

DVD's and so we can provide courtesy copies in their native language to Japanese buyers if and when they come by. Business cards should have English on one side and Chinese on the other and with the urchins in particular having some cards with a Japanese-English combination would probably earn brownie points with business people from what is still the world's largest sea urchin products market.

If edible samples are contemplated, two-pronged forks work better than picks and some sort of plates and towels are needed. In this regard, it is informative to note that Francis Cheung from Grand Hale Marine Products has attended other seafood shows in Hong Kong in the past and has given away between 1,000 and 1,500 pounds of uni. It is one of the more popular items when offered for free. Some sort of temperature monitoring along with perhaps finer control of it is recommended for food safety reasons.

Just before the show opened we got advice from Paddy Wong to develop a "typical" FOB Vancouver price list (in US dollars) for both the urchin and sea cucumber products. For the sea urchins, we predicated the price structure on three grades (A, B and C) and two differently sized bulk trays, 120 grams and 240 g. We also agreed that a season should be defined as September through May each year. We similarly characterized the sea cucumber products as Individual Quick Frozen (IQF) or bulk frozen meat (2 lb. packages) while the skins are cooked and salted. The IQF and bulk meat packages are shipped at 35 pounds and 40 pounds per case respectively. The prices agreed upon are laid out in Table 1. It should be noted that the prices for the cucumber vary between years and are not generally set until the fishery is well underway. This means the ones laid out above provide only a general idea on what might be expected.

Sea Urchin			
Grade	A	B	C
120 g	\$ 9.00	\$ 7.00	\$ 5.00
240 g	\$ 18.00	\$ 14.00	\$ 10.00
Sea Cucumber			
Meat	# 1: IQF		\$ 12.00 per lb.
	#2: 2 lbs. Frozen	From Northern BC	\$ 10.00 per lb.
	#3: 2 lb. Frozen	from Vancouver	\$ 9.00 - 10.00 per lb.
	#4: Alaska		\$ 8.00 per lb.
	#5: Washington	winter	\$ 7.00
	#6: Washington	summer	\$ 6.00
Skin	#1: Northern BC		\$ 18.00 per lb.
	#2: Vancouver		\$ 12.00 - 18.00 per lb
	#3: Alaska		\$ 10.00 - 18.00 per lb
	# 4: Washington		\$ 4.00 - 18.00 per lb

We also discussed the need for recipes and pictures of dishes which will be more familiar and less novel for Chinese consumers. Sushi restaurants are increasingly popular in China and Hong Kong but the uni as sushi is still new and unfamiliar. Paddy mentioned a shark fin soup with uni, using an uni sauce on vegetables and in a seafood pancake which hold some potential. One of the problems with uni is a rich taste that can easily overwhelm the more delicate tastes of other dishes.

The show opened for visitors at about noon and the traffic quickly built. This is a pretty much dedicated trade show so most of the visitors comprised potentially high value customers with direct ties to importers, distributors, restaurants, hotels, supermarkets and other retail outlets. The presence of the sea cucumber and sea urchin associations together in the same booth appeared to work well as many of the visitors who stopped by to check out one product often ended up asking about the other one as well. Sea cucumbers are very popular in China while the sea urchin are still a bit obscure but even with this they are recognized as an interesting and perhaps somewhat novel food item for which they are receiving more enquiries. On the first day the sea urchin side collected 35 business cards from contacts while the sea cucumbers collected

31. Tables 2 and 3 detail the first day's enquiries for the sea urchins and sea cucumbers respectively. In both cases the majority of visitors on the first day were distributors or importers but with the urchins there were a few more end users (5-restaurants vs. 2 chef and restaurant). A fish store (the same one) expressed interest in both.

Table 2: Enquiries for sea urchin producers on the first day of the ASE.

Year	Date	Country	City	Business	First Name	Last Name	Company	Score	Record Ref
2010	Sep-07	China	Guangzhou	Fish store	Siu Man	Cheung	Convergency Trading	6	ASE-2010-SU-13
2010	Sep-07	China	Guangzhou	Importer	Huang	Han Song	Guangzhou Good Frozen... Co. Ltd	?	ASE-2010-SU-10-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Agent	Carlo	Cheng	Grand Wine Cellar	?	ASE-2010-SU-20-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	distrib/rest. suppl.	Phillippe		La Ferme	7	ASE-2010-SU-21-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Suyi	Leung	Waves Pacific Ltd.	6	ASE-2010-SU-18
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Chuck	Cheng	Sea Harvest (HK) Co. Ltd	5	ASE-2010-SU-2-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Edward	Chow	Golden Ocean Food Co. Ltd.	4	ASE-2010-SU-9-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Terence	Ng	Nutrilink Ltd.	6	ASE-2010-SU-4-3
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Tamura	Chiaki	Nippon Foods Co. Ltd	7	ASE2010-SU-1-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Hui Shi	Tang	ZhongShanJinZun...	6	ASE-2010-SC-3-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Gov't (Canada)	Kitty	Ko	AAFCanada		ASE-2010-SU-3-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	import/distrib	Wing	Chan	Oriental Partners Ltd.	6	ASE-2010-SU-14_2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	import/distrib	Vivien	Lee	Worldwide Seafood Ltd.	8	ASE-2010-SU-19-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Importer	Don	Lee	Jetford Int'l Trading Ltd.	6	ASE-2010-SU-9-3
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Importer	Aubrey	Sze	King Asia Marine Products Co. Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SU-9-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Importer	C.K. Tam	Simon	Alaska Int'l Marketing Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SU-15_1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Importer	Brian and Ebby	Lee	Taylor Finefoods (Asia) Ltd.	6	ASE-2010-SU-6
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Importer	Kenji	Fujima	Fukusho Trading Ltd.	6	ASE-2010-SU-5-3
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Importer	David	Yeung	Wai Fung Holdings Ltd.	5	ASE-2010-SU-10-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Importer	Peter and Eric	Lee	Euroasia Group	7	ASE-2010-SU-17
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Importer	Chu	Sun-Chi	Whole Sun Ltd.	5	ASE-2010-SU-19-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	newspaper	Helen	Lai Suet King	Ming Pao Newspapers Ltd		ASE-2010-SU-4-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Restaurant	Tamura	Chiaki	Eliza International Co. Ltd	7	ASE-2010-SU-1-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Restaurant	Johnny	Huen	Hong Yip Service Co. Ltd.	6	ASE-2010-SU-21-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Restaurant	Gianni	Caprioli	Isola Bar and Grill	7	ASE-2010-SU-14_1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Restaurant	Gloria	Chih		5	ASE-2010-SU-7-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Restaurant	Lily	Bloom	Lily Restaurant	5	ASE-2010-SU-8
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Restaurant consult	Samvid	Poon	Magic Bus Productions	6	ASE-2010-SU-16
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	RSU distributor	Lewis	Chan	Wakin (Foods) Ltd.	8	ASE-2010-SU-12
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	TV News	Elmy	Lung	Xinhua News Agency	4	ASE-2010-SU-11
2010	Sep-07	China	Taiwan	import/distrib	Frank	Tsai	Fortune Life Enterprise Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SU-5-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Taiwan	Importer	Yun	Hung	Nippon Meat Packers	3	ASE-2010-SU-7-1
2010	Sep-07	Japan	Tokyo	Importer	Dai "Bear"	Kumazawa	Godak Marketing Corp.	4	ASE-2010-SU-5-2
2010	Sep-07	Singapore	Singapore	Refrigeration	Victor	Mardones	Lowe Worldwide Refrigeration	4	ASE-2010-SU-15_2
2010	Sep-07	Singapore	Singapore	Trade show org.	Lynn	How	koelnmesse	4	ASE-2010-SU-20-2
2010	Sep-07	Vietnam	Ho Chi Minh City	import/distrib	Julie	Ma	Vietnam-Asian Food Int'l	3	ASE-2010-SU-4-1

Table 3: Enquiries for BC sea cucumber producers on the first day of the ASE

Year	Date	Country	City	Business	First Name	Last Name	Company	Score	Record Ref
2010	Sep-07	USA	Denver	Exporter (to China)	John	Zhao	Whole Fresh Foods Inc.	6	ASE-2010-SC-1-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Guangzhou	Fish store	Siu Man	Cheung	Convergency Trading	6	ASE-2010-SU-13
2010	Sep-07	China	Guangzhou	Importer	Zeng	Rui	Zhong Nan Seafood Trading Co. Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-8-3
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	?	Edna	Lam	Silver Dynamic Dev't	5	ASE-2010-SC-2-3
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Kenneth	Lau Hoi-Lin	O/B China Step Ltd.	8	ASE-2010-SC-3-3
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Yannis	Siu Chung Yan	Sojitz (Hong Kong) Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-1-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Herman	Lau Ho Ming	Sojitz (Hong Kong) Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-1-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Hui Shi	Tang	ZhongShanJinZun...	6	ASE-2010-SC-3-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Suyi	Leung	Waves Pacific Ltd.	6	ASE-2010-SU-18
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	John	Ho	Ho Choi Group	6	ASE-2010-SC-4-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Wayne	Ho	Sam Fat Seafood Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-5-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Josh	Wong	King Asia Marine Products Co. Ltd.	8	ASE-2010-SC-7-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Jacky	Au	Gabriel Seafood Co. Ltd.	6	ASE-2010-SC-7-3
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Frozen Foods	Eric	Lam	Keentek	6	ASE-2010-SC-6-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Importer	David	Yeung	Wai Fung Holdings Ltd.	5	ASE-2010-SU-10-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Importer	Mario	Lam	Le Bon Trading Co.	5	ASE-2010-SC-4-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Importer		Rajkumar	Kuhong Int'l Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-3-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	importer/distributor	Billy	Cheng	Canadian Western Trading Co. Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-6-4
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	importer/distributor	Alex	Sit	Sun Wah Marine Products (HK) Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-5-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Organic Food	Peggy	Wong	Green at Heart	6	ASE-2010-SC-6-1
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Restaurant	Martin	Lo	Tien Yi	7	ASE-2010-SC-6-3
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Sea cuke dryer	King	Chang	Hung Kee Ho Marine Products Co. Ltd.	6	ASE-2010-SC-7-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Hong Kong	Traders	Simon	Tam	Alaska International Marketing Ltd.	6	ASE-2010-SU-10-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Huaqiao Kunshan	V-A Manufacturer	Kevin		Kunshan Tachuan Food Man. Co. Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-4-3
2010	Sep-07	China	Macau	Chef	James	Ngwan	City of Dreams	6	ASE-2010-SC-5-3
2010	Sep-07	India	Mumbai	Import/export	Kallas	Dalvi	Triton Management Services Pvt. Ltd.	6	ASE-2010-SC-8-2
2010	Sep-07	Canada	S. Ont.	Export packers	Amy	Chan		6	ASE-2010-SC-2-2
2010	Sep-07	USA	Seattle	Processor	Lawrence	Bushnell		6	ASE-2010-SC-9-2
2010	Sep-07	China	Shenzen	Importer	Rose	Wong	Shenzen Hwachanglong Trading Co. Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-8-1

Sea cucumbers and sea urchins are very different fisheries but the two products can be displayed together so they are somewhat complementary to each other in a marketing sense. The cucumbers are well known in Chinese cuisine and draw buyers in but once that discussion is over they often express interest in the urchins which are still quite novel and somewhat exotic. BC cucumbers are popular in China but the industry wants to further improve their profile and get the prices for both the meat and skins up and allowing people to make the connection between the two as modern, high quality and sustainable fisheries supports an enhanced regard.

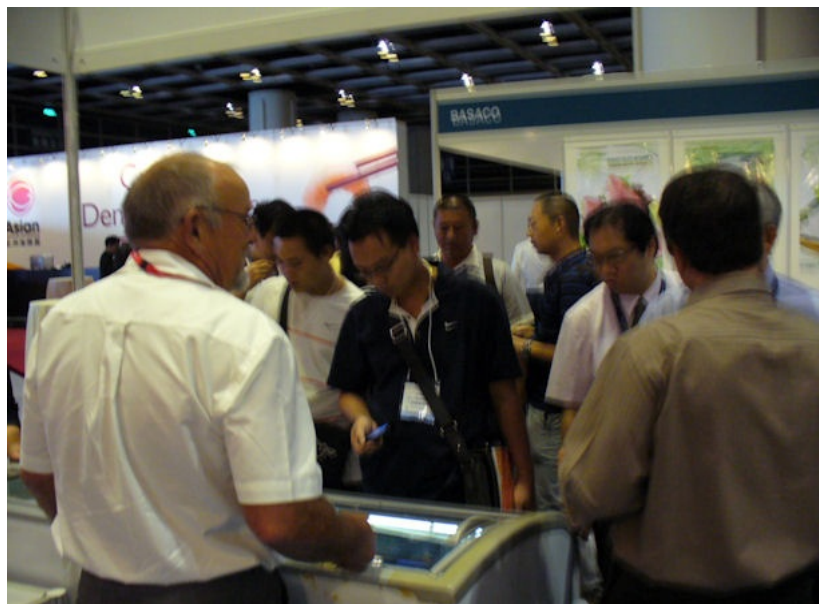


Figure 8: Gary and Pat dealing with visitors.

Everybody who came along helped out with the visitors and it seemed that we also got considerable interest simply because we are from British Columbia (Figure 8). I suspect because we were using the generic roll-ups borrowed from the Province and displaying some literature from the Province we got a number of enquiries for seafood products from BC which nobody at the booth is involved. In these cases we provided some contact advice for various companies but in general we could not fully follow through. Still, all

the Provincial literature that was left out for the taking was scooped up in short order, suggesting there is considerable interest in BC seafood in Hong Kong.

Wednesday Sep. 8.

The show again opened for visitors around noon. Traffic was again pretty steady throughout the day and the cucumbers and urchins again attracted similar amounts of interest in terms of the cards and brochures distributed and in the number of enquiries on obtaining product. Only about 20 and 21 enquiries serious enough to warrant listing the business card were recorded for the urchins and sea cucumbers respectively on the second day (Tables 4 and 5). Again about 2/3 of the interested parties were either importers or distributors while the rest comprised Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's), a couple of consultants, a couple of retailers and 2 trade commissioners from Canada. On the sea urchin side, about 1/3 of the enquiries came from end users including chefs, restauranters and value-added processor.

Ms. Kitty Ko, a Canadian trade commissioner in Hong Kong dropped by for a visit on the second day of the show and discussed our aims at the show. She advised that some purple urchins from BC had proven very popular some years ago, although the only experimental fishing that took place was around 1990. No fishing on these has been allowed since and the fishery would most

Table 4: Enquiries for sea urchin producers on second day of ASE

Year	Date	Country	City	Business	First Name	Last Name	Company	Score	Record Ref
2010	Sep-08	Canada	S. Ont.	Export packers	Amy	Chan		6	ASE-2010-SC-2-2
2010	Sep-08	China	Dongguan	Food Sales	Fahing	Zhu	Nanyinyang Food Co. Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-12-3
2010	Sep-08	China	Guangzhou	Importer	Michael	Yeung	Bright Hope Trading Co. Ltd.	9	ASE-2010-SU-28-2
2010	Sep-08	China	Hangzhou	Chef	Abel	Xie	Landison Plaza Hotel	8	ASE-2010-SU-24
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Chef	Andrew	Sham	A Cellar Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SU-26-3
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Chef	Kevin	Li	Westwood Carvery Ltd	8	ASE-2010-SU-28-1
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Distrib/retailer	Joey	Yick	Sun Wah Japanese Food Ltd.	8	ASE-2010-SU-22-1
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Maria	Cheung	Maxims Group	8	ASE-2010-SU-27-2
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Geoffrey		G Coast Int'l Trading	7	ASE-2010-SU-26-2
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	End User	Vivian	Teng	The Hong Kong Jockey Club	9	ASE-2010-SU-27-1
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Import/export	Henry	Li	Pacific Int'l Seafoods (HK) Co. Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SU-30-1
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Rest. supply			Smart Talent Corp. Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SU-26-1
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Restaurant	Maureen	Loh	The Soup Cafe	8	ASE-2010-SU-29
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong		Ellen	Mob	OPL (HK) Ltd.	6	ASE-2010-SU-25-2
2010	Sep-08	China	Shanghai	import/distrib	Eartha	Chen		7	ASE-2010-SU-23-1
2010	Sep-08	China	Shanghai	v-a processor	David	Cheng		3	ASE-2010-SU-22-3
2010	Sep-08	Singapore	Singapore	Importer	Derek	Cheng	Eastern Harvest Foods (Singapore)	8	ASE-2010-SU-27-3
2010	Sep-08	UK	Kent	Importer	Chris	Harris	Bakkavor	7	ASE-2010-SU-22-2
2010	Sep-08	US	Chicago	Distributor	Sam	Huany	Best Food Service	7	ASE-2010-SU-25-1
2010	Sep-08	US	New York	Importer	John	Cai	Ocean Pacific Seafood Group	7	ASE-2010-SU-23-2

Table 5: Enquiries for the Sea Cucumber producers on the second day of the ASE

Year	Date	Country	City	Business	First Name	Last Name	Company	Score	Record Ref
2010	Sep-08	India	Bangalore	NGO- Environment	Ravi	Gautham	Freind of the Sea (also see SU 35)	5	ASE-2010-SC-10-3
2010	Sep-08	China	Dongguan	Food Sales	Fahing	Zhu	Nanyinyang Food Co. Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-12-3
2010	Sep-08	China	Guangzhou	Importer				7	ASE-2010-SC-11-3
2010	Sep-08	China	Guangzhou	Importer (frozen)				7	ASE-2010-SC-12-2
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Cdn Trade Comm.	Houston	Wong	Consulate General of Canada, HK	6	ASE-2010-SC-15-2
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Consultant	Steven	Cheng	JESPH & Assoc. Consultancy Ltd.	5	ASE-2010-SC-9-3
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Steven	Chung	Sam Long International Ltd.	8	ASE-2010-SC-14-2
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Maria	Cheung	Maxims Group	8	ASE-2010-SU-27-2
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Annie	Ng	Wai Fat Seafood Co. Ltd.	8	ASE-2010-SC-13-2
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Ringo	Wong	Wilson Int'l Frozen Foods (HK) Ltd.	8	ASE-2010-SC-12-1
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Alex	Yeung	Whole Sun Ltd.	8	ASE-2010-SC-13-1
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Roger	Wong	Million (Far East) Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-16-1
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Import/export	Gui Long	Wu	Long Tai An (Holding) Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-15-3
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Import/export	Crispin	Chao	Pacific Web Int'l Co.	7	ASE-2010-SC-15-1
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Importer	Brian	Wong	EAS Worldwide Logistics Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-10-1
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Importer	Vincent	Chu	Harvest Int'l Trading Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-11-1
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Importer	Edmund	Lau	China Int'l Fisheries Hong Kong Ltd	7	ASE-2010-SC-14-3
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Importer	David	Chu	Full Bright Trading Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-11-2
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Importer (frozen)	Kenneth	Hung	Suntex (China) Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-10-2
2010	Sep-08	China	Hong Kong	Wholesaler	Man Yuk	Li	Tung Hoi Trading Co.	7	ASE-2010-SC-14-1
2010	Sep-08	Indonesia	Jakarta	Exhibition Org.	Daud	Salim	Krista Exhibitions	4	ASE-2010-SC-16-2
2010	Sep-08	USA	San Jose	Distributor	Jacky	Djeu	SL Seafood (USA) Inc.	7	ASE-2010-SC-15-4

likely prove to be excessively dangerous anyways because the purples are found in shallow water along exposed coastline open to the Pacific swells. Things even in 1990 got quite ugly on more than one occasion. California fishermen were starting out on purples at about the same time and the purples now comprise about 20% of their fishery. She did volunteer to make additional enquiries at restaurants and other retail outlets and forward any leads she comes up with to us. Live-fresh should be a preferred product form but restaurants with the appropriate temperature capabilities (i.e. refrigerated) are likely few and far between for now.

One of the priority areas the urchin associations want to investigate more closely is live sales. Prior experience in the geoduck fishery which saw ex-vessel and wholesale prices move up dramatically once live deliveries to Hong Kong were successful, strongly supports the notion of building capacity to deliver live to HK. Everybody understands that we are still in the early stages and have a lot of experimental work to do before we can predict just what is needed for success. Essentially the whole process is going to be a lot more complex and therefore expensive and we have to move step-wise through the work so we can be certain that the market will support these extra costs and allow everyone a decent margin that they can live with. The urchins can probably be assumed to be in transit for about 24 hours from Vancouver to Hong Kong. This interval would likely see them draining to a degree that they will be hard to re-hydrate for in-water holding for extended periods as envisaged by Oceanethix.

Mentioned as well the possible Guangzhou event proposed by Paddy and Joanna where the Guangdong Fisheries Association (see ASE2010_SU-30-3) will host a dinner showcasing BC sea urchin and sea cucumber products. We are not sure if this will go forward just prior to or following the Dalian show in November. It may even make more sense to send two separate delegations to Guangzhou and Dalian but this will have to be discussed by the Associations

Ms. Ko responded that the Hong Kong consulate is considering a similar request from a Disneyland (in Shanghai?) event showcasing Canadian agricultural and agrifood products (including seafood). If it is successful they will roll it out for other Disneyland parks around the world and give great exposure to participating enterprises and associations. The costs should be low and affordable as probably the main expense will be supplying samples. Apparently the Canada Beef Association, which is exhibiting downstairs at the Restaurant and Bar show, has responded positively to the idea and is interested in participating. There are any number of other groups involved with the AMP program, including the BC Seafood Alliance, that would similarly benefit from the exposure.

We also discussed the apparent success we have been having at the HK fair and in the benefits we are realizing from cooperation between the sea urchin and sea cucumber groups. Alfa mentioned that he noticed young(ish) women tend to line up and ask about the sea urchin while older women and men seem to be more interested in the sea cucumber. This may reflect a fairly recent appearance of a less traditional mindset in younger women especially as they gain more independence in what is now a rapidly modernizing society where they are less likely held in check by their parents and elders. This is also seen in the growth of more trendy Japanese fashions among young women

Thursday Sep. 9.

The show again opened to visitors at around noon but traffic was considerably lighter. This is reflected in the lower number of contacts collected for each fishery (Tables 6 and 7) on this the last day of the show. There were a number of comments made during the day to the effect that while the show was small, the fact that most visitors are involved in the food service and/or restaurant trade meant it is a valuable avenue for making connections in the Hong Kong and Chinese markets. The consensus seems to be that everybody at these Hong Kong shows is about business and everybody is focussed on that.

The Hong Kong Restaurant and Bar show is occupying the floor below the ASE in the Hong Kong Convention Centre and the visitor passes are valid for both. That show is in its 3rd year and is considerably larger than the ASE although many we spoke to reported that it took some time to build and that the first two years were not as busy. There were also some comments from exhibitors that integrating this show more closely with the Hong Kong Restaurant and Bar Show so they occur on the same floor would probably benefit both. This year it has a great variety of goods on exhibit and lots of freebies being passed around. Wines, beers, spirits, foods from all around the world, cooking seminars, pub ideas, dessert bars, coffees, energy drinks, spices, and financial services are among the many things on offer. The aisles are crowded with not just buyers, but also some consumers as well, and there is an almost carnival-type atmosphere as soon as you wander in.

Table 6: Sea Urchin contact list for the third day of the ASE

Year	Date	Country	City	Business	First Name	Last Name	Company	Score	Record Ref
2010	Sep-09	China	Beijing	Restaurant/Pub	Glen	Watson		8	ASE-2010-SU-33-2
2010	Sep-09	China	Guangzhou	Seafood Ass'n	Qiong (Joanna)	Fang	Guangdong Fisheries Ass'n.	9	ASE-2010-SU-30-3
2010	Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Alan	Law	Law Chi Kee	7	ASE-2010-SU-31-2
2010	Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	Distributor	Isabel	Targ	Union (Seafood) Co.	8	ASE-2010-SU-30-2
2010	Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	import/distrib	Victoria	Chick	Chefs Garden Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SU-31-1
2010	Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	News Magazine	Nonstop		Food-Fun-Night Magazine	6	ASE-2010-SU-38-1
2010	Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	Restaurant	Matthew	Abergel	Zuma Restaurant	9	ASE-2010-SU-34
2010	Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	Restaurant	Jamond	Chan	Winpo Asia Ltd.	8	ASE-2010-SU-32-1
2010	Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	Restaurant			Club de Flavor	7	ASE-2010-SU-37-2
2010	Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	Restaurant			Super Sushi Japanese Restaurant	8	ASE-2010-SU-38-2
2010	Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	Restaurant	Bonnie	So	Chez Les Copains	7	ASE-2010-SU-32-2
2010	Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	Retail	Samuel	Lo	Shiro	9	ASE-2010-SU-37-1
2010	Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	Retail	Kenny	Chan	Supreme Sushi Market	8	ASE-2010-SU-36
2010	Sep-09	India	Bangalore	Sustain. Cert.	Ravi	Gautham	Friend of the Sea	5	ASE-2010-SU-35
2010	Sep-09	Japan	Utsunomiya	Restaurant	Tatsuo and Nic	Sugiyama & Y	Genki Shusho Co. Ltd	8	ASE-2010-SU-33-1

Table 7: Sea cucumber contact list for the third day of the ASE

Date	Country	City	Business	First Name	Last Name	Company	Score	Record Ref
Sep-09	China	Guangzhou	Distributor	Fiona	Lee	TCP Holdings Ltd	8	ASE-2010-SC-17-2
Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	Importer	Paul	Lam	AquaStar seafood Int'l Pty. Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-18-2
Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	Importer/distrib	Catriona	Chan	Kobe Group Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-20-1
Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	Traders	Paul	Lee	Linson Trading Ltd.	7	ASE-2010-SC-19-3
Sep-09	China	Hong Kong	Traders	Joyce	Lee	J-Falcon Trading Ltd (Seafood Trading)	7	ASE-2010-SC-19-2
Sep-09	Taiwan	Keelung	Importer	James	Lu	Sud Americano Int'l Corp.	7	ASE-2010-SC-18-1
Sep-09	Malasia	Kuala Lumpur	Import/distrib.	Macy	Wong	Piau Kee	8	ASE-2010-SC-17-1
Sep-09	China	Macau	Chef	Ka lo	Ng	The Landmark Macau	8	ASE-2010-SC-18-3
Sep-09	USA	Tokyo	US Gov't trade	Tomohiro	Asakawa	NOAA Fisheries	5	ASE-2010-SC-19-1

At the risk of ending this report with a slightly flat finish the remaining bits will simply be a roundup of random comments and observations in no particular order. One of the things we talked about a few times was the need to qualify visitors as possible customers. The sorts of things one might look at for this include: type of business, number of projected customers, infrastructure, logistics, projected sales, demeanour (keenness), someone who asks the right questions, history (anybody just breaking in is not going to be top dog unless they are buying business), experience, training. It was pointed out though that we can't ignore anybody who takes the time and effort to visit us.

We also took a general look at the top 5 questions we were getting for each product. According to Alfa these were:

For sea urchin

1. How do you grade the product? (Colour, texture, dryness, broken/whole)
2. What is the expected shelf life of the product?
3. What is the best or most appropriate holding temperature?
4. What is the flavour profile of the Canadian product vis a vis Japanese and Chilean product and what sorts of factors affect the taste? (Water temperature, water "purity", holding temperature, feed source, etc)
5. What prices are reasonable?

For Sea Cucumber

1. What is your price on skins?
2. How is Canadian sea cucumber processed? (Meat stripped out then skins are cooked and brined (dried) to bring the moisture content down to 17%)

3. Do you have any serving recommendations? (Soup - skins are traditional in Northern China cuisine, not so much in the south)
4. What about the meat? (The meat from the Canadian sea cucumber is kind of unique in that other sea cucumbers are not so well “endowed” so it is sold into a completely different market from the skins. The meat is used in stir fries, and/or deep fries in Southern China, including Taiwan, and boil and serve in sushi.)
5. More on pricing and grading? (The prices are set each year once the product is in. The IQF meats (2 lb. packs) may look better than the 5 lb. vacuum pack because the latter contains pieces but they are equally fresh because they are done on the same day. The grading is actually unique to each company and each area so it hard to generalize.)

Detailed tracking of the number of cards, brochures and DVD's etc given away was not part of the program this time around but general (rough) observations counted about 250 Sea Urchin brochures (Chinese), 200 sea cucumber brochures (Chinese), somewhere in the neighbourhood of about 100 - 200 business cards for each company and 50 Province of BC seafood information brochures. In addition, about 100 Canada pins and 100 Canada ballpoint pens were distributed on request to visitors.

It sounds like Hong Kong and China are both moving to require health certificates for seafood imports. This is going to stand Canadian suppliers at some advantage to their US and Japanese counterparts as this is already pretty much standard practice in Canada.

China is not likely to dramatically reduce its tariffs in the near future. Live product should not be too much of an issue as many distributors are already used to moving live products around. The use of frozen product though does not generate a lot of enthusiasm from consumers as it is kind of novel, even from the logisticians point of view, and there are mechanisms which can provide consumers with absolute assurances that the product(s) have not been serially abused in transit.

Michael Yeung, a trader from Guangzhou, was looking for live reds and trays and agreed to clear seafood for us for the Dalian show. (See log entry ASE2010_SU_28-2)

It can be a bit embarrassing when people stop by at different times and you do not remember them. It happened more than once.

One fellow from the US with considerable credibility in the matter maintains that the average sea urchin price going to Hong Kong is much higher than the price it receives going into Japan (Tomohiro Asakawa -see ASE2010-SC-19-1). This corresponds to informal comparisons of the presence and abundance of uni in the supermarkets in Hong Kong this year and Japan (Osaka, Kyoto and Tokyo) last year. We visited two supermarkets in Hong Kong on the Thursday evening and found in the order of 20 - 30 trays of uni on display per store. These included what looked like small Japanese uni from Hokkaido (*Strongylocentrotus intermedius* - these are the same species as harvested by the Russians in the Kuriles), as well as product from Red Sea Urchins. In Japan last year 3 of 4 stores visited had only pickled uni in jars while the one store that had some on display had only about 4 trays of Japanese product.

On the issue of how few young guys are moving into seafood as a career, something that has been noted in Japan, California and BC among many other places, now would seem to be an opportune time to get some new blood involved simply because the profession/jobs that were keeping so many of them busy until the past few years has basically run out of steam. Seafood industries seem like a bit of a no-brainer destination for unemployed construction workers especially now that construction has basically collapsed in much of the developed world.



I stuck Tim and Mike's picture in just because I thought they are looking pretty good in it.