

Baker-Polito Administration Announces Launch of Seafood Marketing Program

BOSTON – August 10, 2016 – The Baker-Polito Administration today announced the launch of a seafood marketing program aimed to increase awareness and demand for local seafood products and support Massachusetts' fishing and seafood industries. The Massachusetts Seafood Marketing Program kicked off its formal marketing efforts this weekend, participating in the 5th annual Boston Seafood Festival at the Boston Fish Pier and sponsoring a Cambridge chef's participation in a national cooking competition in New Orleans.

"Through the Seafood Marketing Program, we will work with commercial fishermen, seafood processors, retailers, restaurants and fishing communities to promote the sale of sustainably-harvested Massachusetts seafood products both locally and in markets around the world," said Governor Charlie Baker. "Our administration is committed to ensuring the future viability of the Commonwealth's commercial fishing industry and creating a vibrant food economy in Massachusetts."

"Massachusetts' commercial fishing industry and fishing ports contribute significantly to our economy, and are an essential part of our state's history and culture," said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. "The Seafood Marketing Program is an important effort to support this iconic and valuable industry and our coastal communities."

Managed by the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF), the program will educate people on seafood availability, preparation, health benefits, economic contribution and environmental sustainability through printed material, events, partnerships and more. Legislators, agency heads and industry members comprise the program's steering committee.

"Massachusetts fishermen and distributors are part of a 400-year-old tradition of providing delicious, healthy seafood locally and globally," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton. "It is imperative that we support them during this time when much of the fishing industry is struggling."

"Marketing of lesser-known seafood products and partnerships with the fishing and seafood industry in Massachusetts is critical to the success of commercial fishermen, other seafood businesses, and the future of our coastal communities," said DFG Commissioner George Peterson.

The new seafood marketing program chose the Boston Seafood Festival to launch because the event celebrates the commercial fishing heritage of Massachusetts while highlighting the significant infrastructure that is the Boston Fish Pier.

"Here in Massachusetts, we all know that we have the best seafood, not only in the country but worldwide," said State Representative Susan Gifford (R-Wareham). "We just need to do more to get the word out and this new marketing program will start that process. I'm proud to be part of this as a member of the Marine Fisheries Seafood Marketing Steering Committee."

"I appreciate the administration supporting the many facets of local agriculture including the important seafood industry," said State Senator Anne Gobi (D-Spencer). "Positive marketing of all that Massachusetts has to offer benefits our local economy and promotes all agriculture."

"This is a great program to help bolster the commercial fishing industry here in the Commonwealth and especially in New Bedford," said State Representative Paul Schmid (D-Westport). "The fishing industry has a rich history and a substantial impact on the local economy. Thanks to the Baker Administration for this program and acknowledging the importance of our fishing industry."

"Our commercial fisheries are a critical source of jobs in Massachusetts and protein for our nation, and we need to do

everything possible to help them survive and grow stronger,” said Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester). “That’s why I originally filed the legislation to create the marketing program and now it’s more important than ever to the survival of fishing families, ports, and other stakeholders.”

As part of the Seafood Marketing Program debut this past weekend, the program sponsored Cambridge restaurateur Peter McCarthy, the owner of EVOO in Kendall Square, to participate in the Great American Seafood Cook-Off in New Orleans. Chefs from twelve states participated in the competition, which is dedicated to promoting sustainable and domestic fisheries. McCarthy placed third in the competition by preparing smoked Massachusetts Bay bluefish fillet with corn risotto, zucchini and tomato-basil relish to highlight Massachusetts seafood cuisine.

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) is responsible for promoting the conservation and enjoyment of the Commonwealth's natural resources. DFG, with its divisions including the Division of Marine Fisheries, carries out this mission through land protection and wildlife habitat management, management of inland and marine fish and wildlife species, and ecological restoration of fresh water, salt water, and terrestrial habitats. DFG promotes enjoyment of the Massachusetts environment through outdoor skills workshops, fishing festivals and other educational programs, and by enhancing access to the Commonwealth's rivers, lakes, and coastal waters.

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