

## What's New in 2002

As the Seafood Choices Alliance enters its second year of spreading the word about sustainable seafood, we welcome new faces and places to our growing table. New campaigns are well underway from several Seafood Choices partner organizations, including the National Environmental Trust (NET) and the Marine Fish Conservation Network.

NET started this year with a splash, launching its new campaign "Take a Pass on Chilean Sea Bass." The goal is to save the once-obscure species, also known as the Patagonian toothfish, from commercial extinction. NET—a non-profit, non-partisan membership group—is asking chefs, supermarkets, and consumers to refuse to serve, sell, or buy



**Head Above Water:** "As a prominent seafood restaurant, we recognize our responsibility to help keep marine species healthy," says executive chef Mark Franz of San Francisco's Farallon and supporter of "Take a Pass on Chilean Sea Bass."

the fish until its population stabilizes, illegal fishing is eliminated and seabird kills in the fishery are significantly reduced.

Chilean sea bass burst onto most restaurant menus only 10 years ago, and in January 2001 sea bass was named *Bon Appetit's* "Dish of the Year" (for 2000). But now, the fish suffers from severe overfishing by "pirate" poachers in the remote waters near Antarctica. Estimates are that 80 percent of all Chilean sea bass is caught illegally.

The kickoff to the campaign was held on February 5 in San Francisco, where 65 Bay area chefs have removed Chilean sea bass from their restaurants' menus. Chefs that have joined the campaign include Seafood Choices subscribers Mark Franz (Farallon), Patty Unterman (Hayes Street Grill), and Tracy Des Jardins (Jardiniere).

Restaurants are the primary focus of the campaign, as the restaurant industry accounts for 70 percent of all Chilean sea bass sales in the United States.

Gerry Leape, NET marine program director, says that the campaign is modeled to build on the success of SeaWeb's 1998-2000 "Give Swordfish a Break" campaign, which helped set Atlantic swordfish on the road to recovery. "The practical reality is that current regulations are not enough to protect Chilean sea bass from extinction," says Leape. "Until we have a reliable certification system for legal catches of Chilean sea bass to close the market to illegally caught fish, we have to make it unprofitable for the pirates to continue their poaching."

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## What's New in 2002

"We're taking Chilean sea bass off our plates in order to keep it on the planet," says Franz of Farallon, whose signature aquatic-themed ceilings were a fitting backdrop for the event.

"Though the Patagonian toothfish is a delicious fish," said Unterman in a recent interview in the *Contra Costa Times* newspaper, "I'm giving it up."

"Bay Area chefs are just the beginning of a national campaign to save Chilean sea bass from extinction," adds NET president Philip Clapp. "We've gained the support of more than 200 chefs across the nation who want to join in the fight. Since we've seen such an overwhelm-

ing response from Bay Area chefs, we are hopeful that other local restaurants and U.S. cities will quickly follow their lead."

Leape added that NET will hold similar press events at restaurants in Chicago, Philadelphia, New York City, Los Angeles, as well as three or four other U.S. cities throughout the rest of the year.

For more information about the campaign, contact NET at [www.environet.org](http://www.environet.org).

### MOVING THE MESSAGE TO THE MIDWEST

Another new 2002 initiative brings ocean conservation to the American heartland. The Marine



From Ocean to Table: Michele Gaw of the Watermark Restaurant in Cleveland serves up a smile and ocean-friendly, Chatham hook-and-line cod.

Fish Conservation Network (MFCN)—a coalition of over 135 commercial and recreational fishing associations, environmental groups, marine scientists, and aquariums—joined with

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## 2001 YEAR IN REVIEW

**2001** was a year filled with hope and promise for the sustainable seafood movement, tempered by sobering losses from the events of September 11, which hit close to home.

The year saw enormous growth in public awareness of sustainable seafood issues, with the launch of the Seafood Choices Alliance and the kickoff of several new projects and campaigns from many of our partner organizations.

The **Chefs Collaborative** held several events at restaurants in California, Oregon, and Washington in October and November to promote its **Seafood Solutions** educational seminars and buying guide to help chefs make environmentally responsible seafood purchasing decisions. And the **Marine Stewardship Council** continued to promote its sustainable seafood labeling campaign across the country and around the world.

As the year drew to a close, the holiday season gave our subscribers a chance to increase their customers' awareness about choosing sustainable seafood. **Jardiniere** in San Francisco is one of many restaurants that served American farmed caviar to its customers instead of caviar from the endangered Caspian Sea beluga sturgeon. "We wanted to show our guests that they could celebrate New Years and help usher in an era of respect for our ocean resources," said Traci Des Jardins, chef/owner of Jardiniere.

The events of September 11 were a grave reminder of the fragility of life. The destruction of the World Trade Center also took from us the famous **Windows on the World** restaurant, which had joined Seafood Choices earlier in the year. Tragically, many restaurant staff died in the attack, although both the restaurant's owner and executive chef survived. The **Windows of Hope Family Relief Fund**, established to assist the families of WTC foodservice workers who were killed that day, has raised over \$15 million. For more information about the fund, visit [www.windowsofhope.org](http://www.windowsofhope.org).

Although the tough economic times from 2001 appear to be continuing for the restaurant industry in 2002, the new year also presents an opportunity to prove that good environmental decisions make good economic sense.

Seafood Choices in February to conduct the 2002 "Fish and Tell" tour. (See this issue's Washington Beat.)

Tour events included press conferences at seafood restaurants in five inland states, where coastal fishermen, local scientists, and the restaurant chefs spoke in depth about major fisheries issues.

"America's saltwater fishing crisis affects all Americans, not just those living in coastal towns, but anyone who enjoys fishing recreationally, or just eating a seafood meal," says Mark Haugen, Seafood Choices subscriber and executive chef at Tejas in Minneapolis.

In addition to Haugen, participants included Tim Opiel (Rialto Café, Denver), Sarah Stegner (Ritz-Carlton Dining Room, Chicago), Michael Schram (Rattlesnake Club, Detroit), and Michele Gaw (The Watermark, Cleveland). Fishermen came from Massachusetts, Florida, California, and Alaska. An event at New York's Savoy is planned for late March. (See this issue's Calendar.)

For further details about the "Fish and Tell" tour, log on to [www.conservefish.org](http://www.conservefish.org).

These campaigns are just the beginning of another outstanding year for sustainable seafood. Thanks to growing momentum, Seafood Choices looks forward to the rest of 2002 with great anticipation. Although much work remains to be done, we're optimistic about the future of seafood—if we continue to make responsible choices. To learn more, log on to [www.seafoodchoices.com](http://www.seafoodchoices.com). ●

## Aquaculture—The Choice is Ours

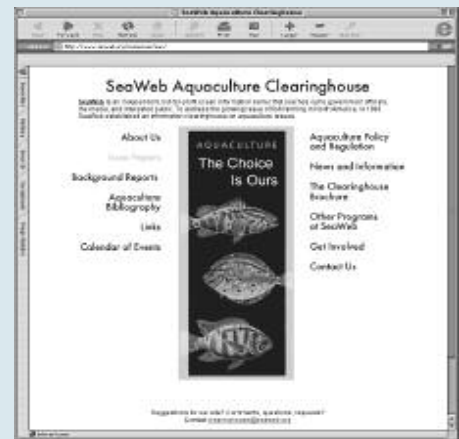
It is a common assumption that aquaculture, the farming of fish and shellfish, is an environmentally safe and sustainable source of seafood. Sometimes that's true, but too often it's not.

Although people have farmed the waters to grow finfish, shellfish, and plants for thousands of years, it is now a rapidly growing industry and fast becoming a corporate-dominated activity emphasizing exports and profits.

Already, more than one fish in four eaten around the world is farm-raised—and that ratio is increasing. In the U.S. alone, aquaculture production has doubled in the last decade, and it is the fastest growing sector of the global food economy. With that growth has come overdevelopment that stresses coastal ecosystems.

But because it is still a fairly young industry, the opportunity exists to evolve in a way that is compatible with conservation of ocean and coastal resources. There are many such operations and techniques currently in use and they need to be encouraged. See this issue's Seasonal Scoop for some of the better farmed choices.

Seafood Choices recognizes the fact that you can't make blanket statements about aquaculture. It's not such a black and white case—not all aquaculture operations are benign and not all are harmful. This is why we are introducing a regular column about the issues that affect



sustainable purchasing decisions for farmed seafood.

One valuable source of balanced information is the **SeaWeb Aquaculture Clearinghouse (SAC)**, formed in 1998 to fill a void in the conservation community. Through its website ([www.AquacultureClearinghouse.org](http://www.AquacultureClearinghouse.org)), weekly email newsletter, and database of scientific literature, the SAC raises awareness of and addresses the pressing issues related to fish farming, including threats to human health and to fish and wildlife. It encourages socially and environmentally responsible aquaculture by targeting quality materials to influential individuals, such as policy makers and members of the media. The SAC works with all parties to keep our coastal waters and communities healthy and productive. Stay tuned for more information about the latest news and ways you can get involved.

**To contact** the SeaWeb Aquaculture Clearinghouse, please call 401/ 272 8822 or visit [www.AquacultureClearinghouse.org](http://www.AquacultureClearinghouse.org). ●

## SUBSCRIBER PROFILES

# Two Companies, One Mission

Last time founding Seafood Choices subscribers shared their ocean philosophy. This season, we highlight the experiences of two sustainable seafood suppliers. In 1999 Henry Lovejoy started his company, EcoFish, which only sells sustainable seafood. Paul Johnson's Monterey Fish Market has supplied San Francisco Bay area chefs since 1979. Read on for their perspectives on ocean conservation.

**SCA:** How did you get interested in sustainable seafood?

**Henry Lovejoy**, president and founder of **EcoFish**, Portsmouth, NH: I began my career in the seafood industry right out of college by starting a live lobster exporting business. This allowed me to travel around the world and visit the large seafood exchanges. It was then that I realized that man's ability to take from the ocean was much greater than the ocean's ability to replenish itself. I felt that the industry needed to change for its long-term survival. Because of my interest in environmental sustainability, I decided that my business would have to focus on sustainable seafood if I were to remain in the industry.



**Paul Johnson**, president of **Monterey Fish Market**, San Francisco, CA: I grew up on the East Coast just as factory trawlers were devastating the fish stocks there. I moved to the West Coast and started Monterey Fish at a time when local seafood appeared to be unbelievably abundant in the marketplace. But it was only in retrospect that I realized I had been witnessing overfishing in action. About five years ago, as I began to see longtime rockfish fishermen being forced off the water because they were unable to make a living, I realized we had come to a watershed. It was either time to take an active part in promoting sustainable fisheries or see our wild fisheries disappear.



**SCA:** How would you describe your ocean philosophy, and do you feel it limits what you're able to offer customers?

**Henry Lovejoy:** In a nutshell, I'd say it's always best to err on the side of conservation. So my philosophy is to get all of the scientific data available and then err on the side of conservation. This ensures the long-term survival and sustainability of seafood species as well as fishing communities.

There are a tremendous number of markets we're not in by choice. But one really neat thing about our philosophy is that you can have your fish and eat it too. Take the top ten most consumed seafoods: We can provide our customers with most of the popular seafoods in the country in a sustainable way; you just need to do your research and find the right fisheries and where they came from.

**Paul Johnson:** I admit that my philosophy may be a little different from the leading mainstream environmental point of view. I believe that consumer boycotts have little impact on industrialized fishing vessels, which are able to move on to other species or areas. It is unfair to destroy the community, culture, and livelihood of the family hook-and-line fishermen who for generations have fished sustainably just because industrialized fishing practices are allowed to deplete stocks.

What has changed is my customers' philosophy. As my customers become more aware of sustainable issues, I am able to direct them to wiser choices. Generally, sustainability and quality go hand in hand. Not only do sustainable methods of fishing have less impact on the environment but they also produce a higher quality product as well, and this is what our customers have always been interested in: quality first and foremost.

**To learn more** about how Seafood Choices Alliance subscribers are using smart choices to offer customers seafood that tastes good and is also good for the environment, log on to [www.seafoodchoices.com](http://www.seafoodchoices.com). ●



Looking for more ways to get involved? Want to hear more about groups working in your neck of the woods to promote ocean friendly seafood? Here's a taste of the many regional efforts underway, plus one regarding genetically engineered fish.

**American Oceans Campaign** works in coastal communities across the country to revitalize the nation's oceans and coastal waters. The group is forming a **Healthy Oceans Business Alliance (HOBA)** to educate Southern California businesses about ocean saving activities, such as choosing sustainable seafood. HOBA members are encouraged to offer sustainable seafood items on their menus and will be listed in its Conservation Guide. To learn more, call 323/ 936 8242 or visit [www.americoceans.org](http://www.americoceans.org).

**Conservation Law Foundation (CLF)** works to solve the environmental problems that threaten the people, natural resources, and communities of New England. CLF is currently working with local fishing communities to promote sustainable hook-and-line fishing, which is less damaging to the ocean environment, to the region's restaurants and retail outlets. For more information, please call 617/ 350 0990, or visit [www.clf.org](http://www.clf.org).

The **Institute for Fisheries Resources (IFR)** is a non-profit organization dedicated to the study, protection and enhancement of both marine and anadromous biological resources on the Pacific coast of the United States and Canada. IFR is initiating a seafood labeling campaign for accurate labeling, so that all consumers can readily tell what species they are buying, its country of origin, and whether it is farmed or wild. Without this basic information, informed decision-making is not possible. For more information, call 541/ 689 2000, or visit [www.ifrfish.org](http://www.ifrfish.org).

The **John G. Shedd Aquarium** in Chicago, IL, is one of the century's oldest aquariums and promotes the enjoyment, appreciation, and conservation of aquatic life and environments.



**Right Bite** is Shedd Aquarium's educational seafood campaign to help consumers discover how their choices can protect the health of our oceans. Making informed choices—the "right bites"—about the seafood we buy at the store or order in restaurants ensures our seafood favorites will be around for a long time. For more information, log onto [www.sheddaquarium.org](http://www.sheddaquarium.org) or call 312/ 939 2438.

The **South Carolina Aquarium**, which opened in Charleston in 2000, is a regional aquarium that showcases the biodiversity of southeast US in over 60 live and interactive exhibits. Through partnering with local restaurants, seafood suppliers and colleges, the Aquarium is developing an education program to promote local, sustainable seafood choices. For further information visit [www.scaquarium.org](http://www.scaquarium.org) or call 843/ 579 8555.



The **Center for Food Safety (CFS)** is a national, non-profit membership organization dedicated to legal and grassroots efforts to address the increasing impacts of our food production system on human health, animal welfare, and the environment. CFS has launched a legal and grassroots campaign to prevent the commercialization of genetically engineered fish until various government agencies address specific environmental and human health concerns. In conjunction with **Friends of the Earth** and **Clean Water Action**, CFS is asking seafood distributors, grocers, chefs, and restaurant owners to pledge not to purchase or sell genetically engineered fish and to oppose their commercialization. For more information, contact 800/600-6664, or visit [www.gefish.org](http://www.gefish.org).

**More information** on these and other partners can be found at [www.seafoodchoices.com](http://www.seafoodchoices.com). ●

## SEASONAL SCOOP

## Jambalaya baby!

In honor of recent Mardi Gras festivities, this season's scoop features a few Cajun favorites. During Lent fish is traditionally chosen as an alternative to red meat, and Mardi Gras and Cajun cooking are synonymous with New Orleans. So what better reasons do we need to promote this season's featured seafood, which just happen to also be Southern traditions?

## Good WINTER SELECTIONS include:

**Catfish.** American farm-raised catfish have become synonymous with down-home southern cooking. They are raised in large freshwater ponds with little

discharge, which means that escapes of fish and wastes are controlled. Farm-raised catfish are not bottom feeders, and because their diet is plant-based, they do not require feed made from wild fish. Catfish are available year-round. Be sure to see this season's recipe!

**Crawfish.** These cousins of lobster and shrimp are a Cajun favorite. U.S. Crawfish are predominantly farmed in the southeastern United States, and with little impact on the surrounding environment. They offer more meat than shrimp and are a sweet alternative to

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## CATFISH RATATOUILLE

From *Jacques Pépin's Table*, Bay Books, 1995

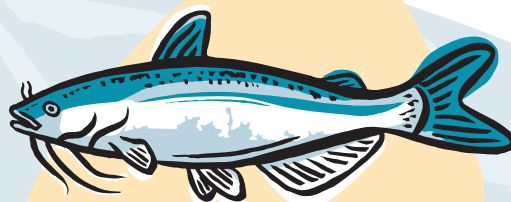
**Ratatouille:**

- 4 tb virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion (4 oz), chopped (about 1/2 cup)
- 1 small eggplant (6 oz), cut into 3/4 inch pieces
- 1 small green bell pepper, cut into 1/2 inch pieces
- 1 zucchini (6 oz), cut into 1/2 inch pieces
- 1 large ripe tomato, halved, seeded and cut into 1/2 inch pieces
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled, crushed and finely chopped (about 2 tsp)
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper

**Tarragon Oil:**

- 2 tb loose fresh tarragon leaves
- 2 tb fresh chives, snipped
- 3 tb water
- 2 tb virgin olive oil

- 4 catfish filets** (about 7 oz each), cleaned of all yellow surface fat
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 cup water



In a large skillet or saucepan, heat the oil. Sauté the onion in the hot oil for 2 minutes. Add the eggplant, and sauté for 2 minutes; then add the green pepper and zucchini, and sauté for 1 minute longer. Stir in the tomato, garlic, salt, and pepper. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook for 10 minutes. Set aside.

Meanwhile, place the tarragon, chives, water, and oil in a mini-chop, and process until liquefied. Pour into a bowl. Set aside.

Place the catfish, salt, and water in a saucepan, and bring to a boil. When boiling, reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook 3 minutes on the first side. Then turn, and cook 3 minutes on the other side, or until tender.

To serve, divide the ratatouille among four plates, and arrange a fish fillet on top of each portion. Coat lightly with the tarragon oil. Serve immediately.

**Yield:** 4 servings.

lobster. Pond-raised crawfish become available in early November, peaking in March.

**Oysters.** These shellfish have been part of our diets for at least 2,000 years, and have been associated with legendary figures from Cassanova to Rockefeller. It used to be common wisdom to eat them only during winter months, but they are available any month of the year now, thanks in part to aquaculture. Farming techniques are relatively benign and can sometimes be beneficial because oysters “clean” the water. One caution: proper handling is critical because oysters can carry the vibrio microbe, responsible for harmful, sometimes fatal, side effects in humans. Only buy from trusted sources. ●

## WASHINGTON BEAT

### FROM THE MARINE FISH CONSERVATION NETWORK

The MFCN and Seafood Choices teamed up to bring ocean conservation to five inland cities via the **Fish and Tell** media tour in February (See this month's “What's New in 2002”). The events featured fishermen, local scientists, and restaurant chefs who told their stories, talked about the scope of the American fisheries crisis, and explained how federal fisheries management affects consumers.

The public can help turn fisheries management around by supporting federal legislation that will make conservation of ocean resources a priority. One such piece of legislation, the **Fisheries Recovery Act of 2001**, is currently moving through the U.S. House of Representatives and has gained 49 cosponsors, including several from cities that were stops on the “Fish and Tell” tour.

“It's important to make people in inland states understand the importance of fish conservation because their representatives' and senators' votes are as important as those from Florida, California, or Alaska,” says Lee Crockett, executive director of the MFCN, explaining the need for taking their message inland.

**For more information**, log onto [www.conserve-fish.org](http://www.conserve-fish.org) or call 202/ 543 5509. ●



### SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD in THE NEWS

**F**uzzy fish math. A recent study published in the journal *Nature* raises somber questions about the world's fish supply. This article charges that China has been inflating its catch statistics for the past decade, with serious implications on the state of the world's fisheries. The international organization responsible for compiling fisheries statistics, which are collected from individual countries' reports, had been reporting that, since the late 1980s, the global catch (not including aquaculture) was stable or even increasing. When the global catch figures were adjusted to reflect China's misreporting, the authors of the study found that the world catch had actually steadily declined during the past ten years. This new evidence means that the true state of the oceans is far worse than anyone has previously realized, and contrasts with the rosy picture the seafood industry has until now portrayed.

**Basa nova.** Recently, you may have heard about a fish sold as “Vietnamese catfish,” “tra,” or “basa.” Seafood Choices has been getting inquiries about this fish. It is farmed in the Mekong River in Vietnam, and while it is related to the catfish family (there are over 1,000 species of catfish), it is very different from the channel catfish raised in the United States. Basa has not yet come under environmental scrutiny; American farm-raised catfish, on the other hand, has long been cited as an environmentally responsible choice.

**World is His Oyster.** Literally. Subscriber Jay Shaffer, Chef/Owner of Shaffer City Oyster Bar & Grill (New York City), raises a variety of oyster all his own. Recently profiled in *The New York Times*, “Shaffer Cove” oysters are served in the restaurant and, for those in the neighborhood, available for take out. Call 212/ 255 9827.

*Do you have news worth serving up in Fish Dish?* Please send your ideas to [info@seafoodchoices.com](mailto:info@seafoodchoices.com). ●



## TRENDS to WATCH: Fish Is the Dish, But Chefs and Retailers Favor More Ocean Friendly Selections

Seafood Choices wants to hear what chefs and retail purveyors think about sustainable seafood. Seafood Choices recently conducted a nationwide survey of seafood chefs and retailers to learn about their concerns. Here are some highlights:

- **41%** of restaurants **report a seafood entrée as the most popular item** on the menu.
- **66%** of restaurant chefs are **interested in receiving information about “good choices.”**

While few chefs (21%) and restaurateurs (31%) have heard much about environmental impacts associated with wild-caught fish, many are willing to take action.

- **Chefs (62%)** and **retail sellers (60%)** are **interested in connecting with suppliers who can source environmentally responsible fish.** This could mean real demand for those who can source responsible catch. ●

## CALENDAR

### MARCH

**12-14—International Boston Seafood Show.** Boston, MA. For more information, visit [www.bostonseafood.com](http://www.bostonseafood.com) or call 207/ 842 5599.

**20—Sharks: Predators or Prey?** Public forum. Monterey, CA. First in a series presented at the Monterey Bay Aquarium. For more information, call 831/ 633 6565.

**23-27—International Caterers Association.** Annual education conference. New Orleans, LA.

**26—Fish and Tell.** MFCN and Savoy restaurant. New York, NY. For more information, call 202/ 543 5509.

### APRIL

**17-20—International Association of Culinary Professionals** Annual conference. San Diego, CA.

**22—Earth Day**

**23-27—World Aquaculture 2002.** Conference. Beijing, China.

**24—Whaling and Overfishing.** Public forum. Monterey, CA. Presented at the Monterey Bay Aquarium. For more information, call 831/ 633 6565.

**25—Taste of the Nation: Share Our Strength.** Washington, DC. For information about events in your city, log onto [www.strength.org](http://www.strength.org) or call 800/ 969 4767.

### MAY

**15—What's For Dinner? Seafood Choices.** Public forum. Monterey, CA. Presented at the Monterey Bay Aquarium. For more information, call 831/ 633 6565.

**17-19—Cooking for Solutions: Celebrity Chefs Celebrate Sustainable Cuisine.** Monterey Bay Aquarium. Monterey, CA. For more information, call 831/ 648 4800.

**Do you have an upcoming event?** Email us with the event, date, and name of sponsoring organization at [info@seafoodchoices.com](mailto:info@seafoodchoices.com), or call toll free 866/ SEA MORE.

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