

JULY 2020

FISH

FISHERIES RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION NEWS



MARKETS

Changing business sentiment

MANAGEMENT

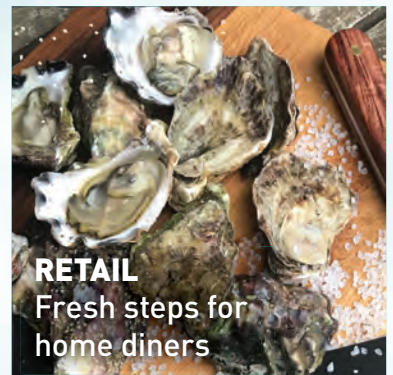
Building on current lessons

INTERNATIONAL

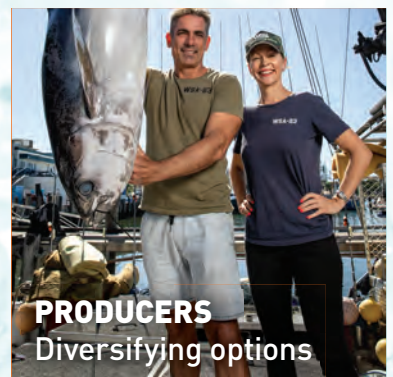
Global COVID-19 responses



Helping hands



RETAIL
Fresh steps for home diners



PRODUCERS
Diversifying options



SALES DATA
Retail growth continues



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FRDC acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands on which FISH magazine is produced, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge the special relationship that Indigenous Australians have with their traditional lands and waters.

Contents



3
**Charting a course
through uncertain
waters**

4
**Food sector ponders
new recipes for
business**

7
**Taking stock,
moving forward**

8
**The future of
Australian
agriculture
and fisheries**

9
In brief

11
**Community
connections key to
coping with crisis**

12
**Seafood sector
steps up to feed
those in need**

14
**COVID-19 impacts
global seafood
markets**

17
**Seafood rides new
market waves**

20
**Meeting the
home dining
challenge**

23
**Freezers stocked,
then fresh
sales surge**

26
**Time online
to upskill**

While we endeavour to ensure the content published in FISH magazine is as relevant and up-to-date as possible, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the pace of change. We recognise that some regulations and restrictions we report on may change between the time the magazine leaves its production phase and when it lands in the hands of readers. Thank you for your understanding.



Charting a course through uncertain waters

By Peter Horvat

For most of us, 2020 has been a bumpy ride to say the least. Over the past three months in particular, staff at the FRDC have been speaking with people from across fishing and aquaculture to see how they are faring.

It is apparent that no two people have the same story – even those in the same fishery or business. However, perseverance and hope shine through.

Old tales demonstrate the varied journeys of ocean-faring vessels when charting new courses. Some find storms and battle to stay afloat; others see the storm clouds and look for safe harbour to wait out the worst. Others find the golden passage, bathed in sunshine and strong tailwinds to carry them through.

With the tumult of 2020 – the year of the unprecedented – it is tempting to see the events as beyond our control.

But at the FRDC, our focus is on observing

and making sense of the world around us so that we might help improve it across fishing and aquaculture. We choose to see the present challenges as instructive.

In a small way, the stories in the following pages will eventually serve as a kind of record for how the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, related food service and others, including FRDC, have dealt with this time, and a guide for improvements in the future.

How some have found safe harbour in this particular storm will be more clearly revealed in the coming months, but we do already have glimpses of some likely answers. Businesses chasing overseas dollars are now considering diversifying markets and connecting with communities on their doorsteps. Vertical integration is also looking very attractive, as opposed to the sometimes disparate and fragmented supply chains of a pre-COVID-19 world.

The crisis has brought out the best in many, with people reaching out to provide support and

offer a helping hand to those in need. The seafood community has been no different and we are thrilled to be able to cover some of those heartwarming efforts in this edition.

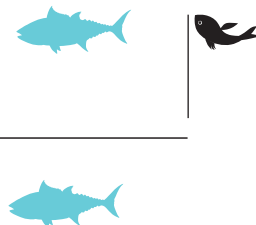
In the continued break from our regular material, we have focused unabashedly on how businesses are faring in these challenging circumstances. We look forward to returning to a more regular mix of research and other content soon.

The turbulent seas stirred up by COVID-19 have not calmed quite yet, but they have revealed the resilience and innovation of fishing and aquaculture across Australia.

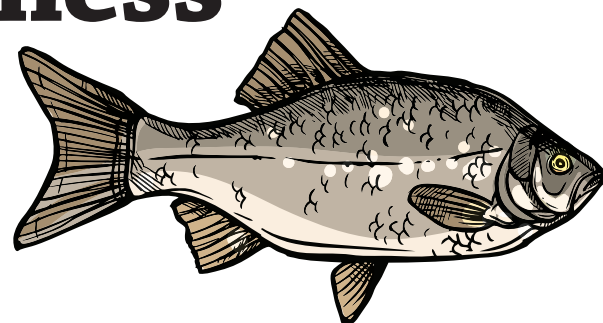
We hope that by taking stock of our experiences, it will put us in good stead for the future – stronger for having weathered the storms together.

For the members of the seafood sector, the challenges have also brought welcome recognition of the valuable service they provide as food producers, showing that every stormy cloud does indeed have its silver lining. **F**





Food sector ponders new recipes for business



The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have disrupted economies and communities around the world, with many industries now rethinking future supply chains and market structures

By Brad Collis

For Australia's fishers and farmers whose supply chains and markets disappeared – in extreme cases, overnight – the future seems unpredictable, to say the least. Some are describing the post-COVID-19 future as a blank canvas on which to potentially redraw many of the economic frameworks that have governed primary industries for decades.

How the Australian seafood sector can be better prepared for future challenges is the big conversation now happening.

The pandemic appears to have awakened Australian consumers to the value and importance of Australian primary producers, and hopes are high that this might lead to increased investor and policy support for the food producing and food processing sectors.

This perspective has been bolstered by export product in industries such as meat and seafood being successfully redirected to domestic retail markets, as home consumption filled the initial gap created by the closure of the food service and hospitality sectors.

However, leading market observers are wary of reading anything long-term into this. Executive director of the Australian Farm Institute, Richard Heath, points out that Australia lost much of its food processing sector

because it could not compete with lower-cost offshore processing.

Changing this, he says, would require major investment in technology to lower the cost of production in Australia, or a willingness by Australian consumers en masse to pay more for Australian product (and possibly both).

Agriculture policy consultant and Food Agility CRC board member, Mick Keogh, also notes the public sentiment in support of Australia being more self-reliant as a manufacturer – but he too believes any structural response to the market upheaval caused by the pandemic will be determined by economics, not by any shift in government policy or industry support.

With respect to the food sector, he is particularly sceptical that major retailers will retreat from supply chains that deliver for the lowest cost, even if it continues to make them dependent on overseas manufacturers.

Not everyone, though, is ready to write off the 'homegrown' sentiment as a passing fad or something that cannot be captured.

Acting CEO of Seafood Industry Australia Veronica Papacosta believes the widely expressed need for trust and confidence in food sources, supply chains and long-term sustainability provides an opening to position

clean, green, sustainable Australian seafood to the domestic consumer as they prioritise Australian origin.

Domestic markets

Veronica Papacosta says the view from within the seafood sector is more optimistic in terms of the potential for positive change in the domestic marketplace, which has seen increased sales and higher prices for seafood as part of the surge in home cooking.

Increased retail trade has helped, in a small way, to offset the overall decline in sales that resulted from the closure of food service and export trade. The seafood sector as a whole is bracing for a forecast drop in gross value product (GVP) from about \$3.1 billion to \$2.4 billion this financial year, based on figures from the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences.

While it remains uncertain how much of this can be clawed back when food service operators reopen, and whether the increase in domestic retail demand will be sustained, the expected economic recession means the cook-at-home skills (and enthusiasm) honed during lockdown are expected to remain of value – to consumers and to seafood suppliers.

Feeding into this is a shift by some fishers and suppliers to more processing



and packaging – in particular, more frozen seafood as a way of securing the retail supply chain. Retail data from Nielsen Homescan, commissioned by the FRDC, indicates the frozen seafood targeting convenience meals at home is the fastest-growing market sector. Frozen seafood retail sales have increased 10.8 per cent over the past year, and leapt 26 per cent in the four weeks to 21 March 2020 (see story page 23).

Diversification

Veronica Papacosta says as a risk management strategy, investment in frozen storage by producers or co-ops would allow supply chain diversification and would smooth out price fluctuations.

Backing this up are the results of FRDC-invested research by the University of Queensland that found no discernible difference between fresh fish and fish that is properly frozen and stored.

Similarly, abalone processors in Tasmania turned to an ‘old technology’ – canning – to manage the 36 tonnes of live abalone in tanks when export markets closed. Tasmania’s director of marine resources at the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, Ian Dutton, says government assistance helped in making the switch, allowing the product to retain value with an extended shelf life to target alternative markets.

He sees this as part of larger emergency adaptations to seafood chains and production practices during the crisis – from safe workplaces to fish processing and marketing – which are sparking new thinking and new collaborations. This includes new processing technologies, or alternative uses for existing technologies. A case in point: whisky and gin distillers producing hand sanitiser.

“I can see us carrying forward the innovation that had to happen during COVID-19 to thinking differently

about businesses going forward. This could include getting more serious about market diversification overall.

“There is a lot of interest in trade strategy across all seafood jurisdictions, including how we continue to trade seafood globally. Exports remain a sharp focus for everyone,” he says.

Exports

The pandemic has shown the extent to which some sections of the seafood sector are highly dependent on a small number of large markets.

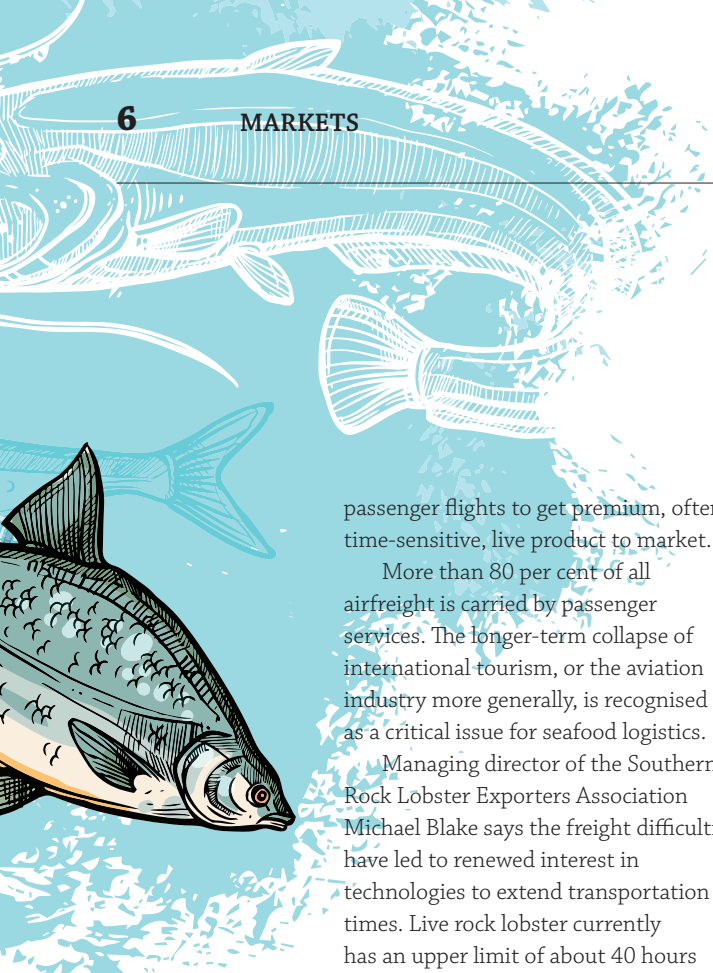
China, for instance, buys 95 per cent of Australian rock lobster and 42 per cent of abalone. Chair of Southern Rocklobster Ltd (SRL), Colin Buxton, says the reliance on Chinese markets has been well recognised for many years, and adds this is not necessarily negative.

“China is where the product gets the best prices. It provides the best returns for fishers and the best GVP for the Australian economy. Even now, there is no clear message to say this should change. Price and market fluctuations are an accepted part of the industry,” he says.

More fundamental than which market it sells to, however, is how the product can be delivered. COVID-19 has revealed exporters’ dependence on tourism and

“I can see us carrying forward the innovation that had to happen during COVID-19 to thinking differently about businesses going forward. This could include getting more serious about market diversification overall.”

Ian Dutton, director of marine resources, Tasmania



passenger flights to get premium, often time-sensitive, live product to market.

More than 80 per cent of all airfreight is carried by passenger services. The longer-term collapse of international tourism, or the aviation industry more generally, is recognised as a critical issue for seafood logistics.

Managing director of the Southern Rock Lobster Exporters Association Michael Blake says the freight difficulties have led to renewed interest in technologies to extend transportation times. Live rock lobster currently has an upper limit of about 40 hours from processor to destination.

He suggests new packing technologies could also help the industry move away from polystyrene to more environmentally friendly products, further enhancing its 'clean green' reputation. He sees this as the stronger option to any processing: "Any attempt to value-add actually devalues the product," he says.

The immediate challenge for the industry is to resume exports with the limited freight available. Businesses may be eligible for assistance from the Australian Government's \$110 million International Freight Assistance Mechanism to access dedicated airfreight services to reach international markets, although there is uncertainty about what will happen when the subsidy is no longer available.

In addition, smaller seafood exporters of all fish species are finding it difficult to aggregate enough product to take advantage of this assistance.

Prior to COVID-19, SRL had also

"The Australian seafood industry plays a critical role in the global food task and we are pleased to see this being acknowledged. It has improved industry morale, regardless of fallout."

Veronica Papacosta, acting CEO,
Seafood Industry Australia

been discussing a marketing levy, supported by research from financial advisory firm KPMG. Michael Blake says if this goes ahead, it might be used, in part, to help build the domestic market, which is currently the second largest buyer of Southern Rock Lobster. However, most of this is sold to the Australian-based Chinese community and Chinese tourists returning home – both affected by recent restrictions.

Government support

Assistant Minister for Forestry and Fisheries, Senator Jonathon Duniam, says while ultimately it is up to each individual business to decide where they do business, it is clear that diversification is now front of mind for many across the seafood sector. He says the Australian Government is committed to opening as many doors as possible to help facilitate this.

Senator Jonathon Duniam says the extraordinary circumstances have given rise to an equally extraordinary response from the seafood industry, which has proven its resilience time and time again. "That response has included everything from adapting to online trading to a shifting focus on market diversification."

Senator Jonathon Duniam says one of the Government's first actions was to create a dedicated point of contact within Austrade (the Australian Trade and Investment Commission) to work directly with fishers to find alternative markets.

"This was in addition to our \$110 million International Freight Assistance Mechanism, to help secure freight flights

for seafood and other produce into key export markets. The industry has also adapted swiftly domestically, to offer alternative sale options in a way that has never been seen before in our country."

He cites examples of smaller, regional seafood sellers offering free home delivery, which has in many cases been a sell-out success as Australians embraced the opportunity to have seafood delivered to their door.

Another example of agility has been Australia's largest seafood auction at the Sydney Fish Markets (SFM) shifting to remote online bidding at the morning seafood auction when social distancing halved its capacity.

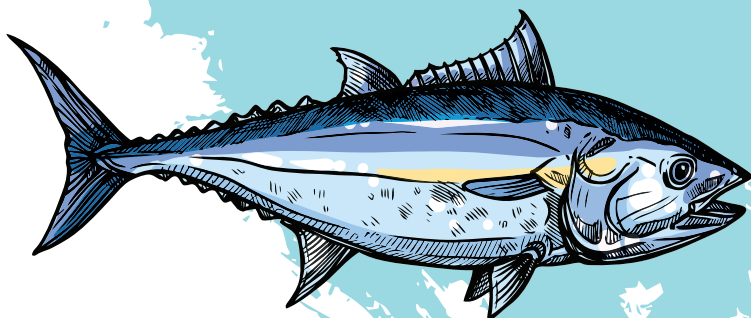
"It's a move the SFM says many were reluctant to make, but after the situation forced it they are now converts," Senator Jonathon Duniam says. "It is clear that emerging digital seafood marketplaces will play a bigger role in the sector as we move forward, as both sellers and the consumers adapt and change in the wake of the coronavirus."

He hopes this is something the industry can capitalise on. "There is no doubt that COVID-19 will fundamentally change Australia's seafood sector forever and we are committed to working with the industry to ensure that this change is for the better," he says.

For Veronica Papacosta, there is an overall "sense of positivity" emerging through the sector's determined approach to the crisis and the opportunity presented to reaffirm its place as an essential part of the food supply chain.

"The Australian seafood industry plays a critical role in the global food task and we are pleased to see this being acknowledged. It has improved industry morale, regardless of fallout.

"Resilience and hard work will be the key to rebuilding our sector, but community support is essential to our immediate survival," she says. **F**





Taking stock, moving forward

Lessons from decisions made during the COVID-19 crisis will help to shape the recovery and future resilience of Australia's seafood sector

By Catherine Norwood

Classically, resilience is the ability to recover from a setback, although that may not necessarily be a return to the way things were.

For director of marine resources at the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) in Tasmania, Ian Dutton, examining the issues that arose during the pandemic and how decisions were made can help build adaptive management capacity and assist decision-making in the future.

In past crises, such as the global financial crisis, there has not been adequate documentation of what happened, what options were assessed, how response priorities were decided, and how well the responses performed, he says.

"There is much that we learn about the robustness of our decision systems when they are placed under stress during a crisis like COVID."

This approach underpins a project DPIPWE has initiated. It is led by Emily Ogier and Steven Rust at the University of Tasmania's Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, which is tracking COVID-19 events and industry responses as they happen.

Emily Ogier leads the FRDC's Human Dimensions Research subprogram, and the FRDC has commissioned her to expand the project scope beyond Tasmania, to incorporate national and international events. Preliminary results are already being used to inform response options, although the impacts of the coronavirus continue to unfold, providing an important historical reference to learn from.

Based on the difficulties encountered and responses to date, Ian Dutton sees the following three areas as important in increasing the resilience of the seafood sector.

Business basics

Business structures and employment practices common in the fishing sector meant many small fishing businesses in need of assistance were not eligible for government support on offer, such as the JobSeeker or JobKeeper programs.

While peak industry bodies have worked with governments to address the eligibility criteria for these and other programs, including small business grants or low-interest loans, this work will need to be ongoing. The capacity to support these businesses is often highly dependent on how much they resemble 'mainstream' businesses.

For many in the seafood sector, this crisis might provide the impetus to review their operating structure and consider changes to allow easier access to a range of services and support programs.

Coordinated action

During the crisis, and as recovery efforts evolve, one of the most effective strategies to emerge has been the alignment of effort and collaboration across a wide array of sectors.

In Tasmania, the Seafood Industry Recovery Coordination Group, convened by the Minister for Primary Industries and Water, brings together all key government agencies, peak seafood industry groups and fisheries advisory experts every

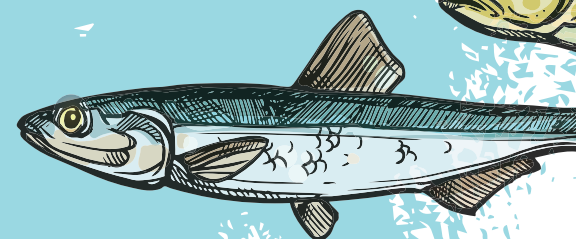
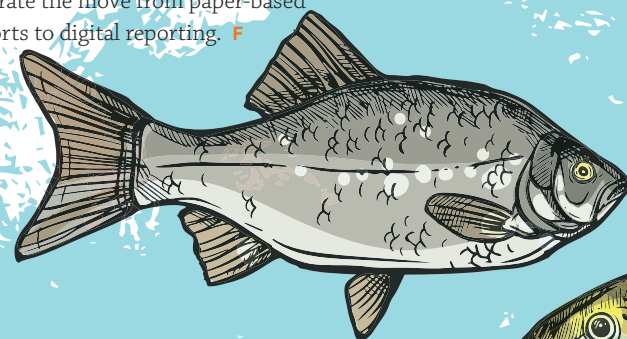
fortnight to share information, set priorities and coordinate responses. The priorities agreed on by this group feed into a whole-of-government group, the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council.

While these groups are meeting in response to the crisis, Ian Dutton says continued collaboration and coordinated effort in the long-term will help to build the resilience of the seafood sector.

Digital capacity

The move to online Zoom or MS Teams meetings might seem inconsequential, but it has accelerated information sharing, communication and speedy decision-making, and improved collaboration between stakeholders at all levels of the sector. All of this will improve the capacity and responsiveness of the seafood sector.

The crisis has also highlighted the value of having access to real-time or near-real-time information in fisheries management. In Tasmania, this realisation will accelerate the move from paper-based catch reports to digital reporting. **F**





The future of Australian agriculture and fisheries

Andrew Metcalfe AO, Secretary of the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, provides his perspective on the challenges and opportunities ahead for our primary industries



Andrew Metcalfe AO
Secretary, Department
of Agriculture, Water
and the Environment

Australian agriculture is facing unprecedented change. We need to ensure the right foundations are in place to position Australian agriculture to continue its success story, delivering value to our farmers and the broader community now and into the future. Innovation is key. It drives productivity growth, as well as the sustainability and resilience of the sector. It will help us strive for our target for a \$100 billion sector by 2030, and to ensure that agriculture is a significant driver for the Australian economy to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, including through creating new job opportunities.

I feel privileged to be leading the new Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment during these unprecedented times. Bringing these three portfolios together presents an opportunity to support real change across our landscapes, water and marine resources, and the Australian Antarctic Territory. By bringing together our agriculture, water and environmental functions we are making the most of expertise across government and taking an integrated approach to managing our natural resources.

The recent bushfires, prolonged drought and COVID-19 shocks reinforce the need for a world-class agricultural innovation system that can quickly respond to emerging risks and opportunities.

Australia's agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries are already showing resilience and adaptability during the COVID-19 pandemic by driving innovative, new ways of working and changing business models. For example, seafood and farmers' markets across the country have been exploring alternative models such as interacting with customers directly, including setting up online ordering and allowing customers to drive through and collect produce without leaving their cars. The move to online auctions has been a recent feature of the seafood and farming industries, as have changes to business operations to meet health and social distancing requirements. But there is more to be done.

We have heard from the range of different reviews and stakeholder feedback over recent years that the agricultural innovation system needs to be improved, including through the 2019 Ernst and Young report *Agricultural Innovation – A National Approach to Grow Australia's Future* and our discussion paper on 'Modernising the RDC system'. It is clear that there are opportunities to maximise the benefits that innovation can bring.

Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management David Littleproud MP is a firm believer that Australia's agricultural innovation system has the potential to be the best in the world. I am excited to help him deliver on this ambitious agenda.

In modernising Australia's agricultural innovation system, we are focused on four key areas:

- increasing investment into research and development (R&D) that targets transformational productivity gains, cross-sectoral and public good challenges;
- accelerating the uptake and adoption of R&D outcomes, including commercialisation of R&D where appropriate;
- improving collaboration and partnerships across the system and increasing new investment flows, including from international partners; and
- maximising the opportunities presented by agtech.

Australia could be a hub in the Southern Hemisphere for agtech and innovation. There is scope to learn from the experience of international partners and build upon our competitive advantages for innovation. In building Australia's profile as an innovation centre of excellence, we should consider the value and benefits we bring as a region and work with our international neighbours such as New Zealand.

I look forward to ongoing opportunities to work with agriculture, fishing and forestry sector businesses and organisations as Australia emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic and focuses on embedding more innovative practices to help businesses grow and create job opportunities. **F**



In brief

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Former FRDC chair and long-time Queensland **Senator Ron Boswell** has received a Queen's Birthday Honour, becoming an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in the general division. The honour recognises the former senator's distinguished service to the Parliament of Australia, to the people of Queensland, and to fisheries research and development. He served in the Senate, where he represented the National Party for 31 years, and also served as the FRDC's chair for three years.

Also awarded an AO in the general division is Victorian **Allan McCallum**, for distinguished service to primary industry, particularly to grain, seafood and medicinal plant production, and to professional organisations. He has been chairman of the Tassal Group Ltd since 2005 and has had longstanding involvement in board and leadership roles.

Former FRDC director **Heather Brayford** has been awarded the Public Service Medal for outstanding public service to legislative reform and policy development in Western Australia. She has worked in the public sector for more than 30 years and is currently WA's Deputy Director General at the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.

Geoff Allan has been awarded the Public Service Medal for outstanding public service to New South Wales, and to aquaculture science. He is currently Deputy Director General of Fisheries in NSW, following a long career in fisheries and aquaculture research and policy. His scientific work in aquaculture nutrition is world-renowned and estimated to have reduced the cost of production in the Australian industry by approximately 10 per cent a year. He also managed an FRDC subprogram on aquaculture for a decade. **F**

Comment on aquatic plant names

There is a growing interest in aquatic plants, including seaweeds, as the basis for new aquaculture. With an increasingly diverse range of uses for these plants and their chemical constituents, it's a timely move to provide a guide to the naming of species in Australian markets.

A draft of the Australian Standard for Aquatic Plant Names has been developed and is open for public comment until 15 August 2020. **F**

More information
www.facebook.com/intuitivefoodsolutions



Fish stocks assessed

A new edition of the Status of Australian Fish Stocks (SAFS) reports is in the works, with 28 new species to be added to the 2020 release. This is expected to be published in December via the SAFS website www.fish.gov.au and SAFS smartphone app. It will be the fifth edition of the reports, which were launched in 2012, and increases the total species included from the original 49 to 150.

Species added this year include:

Australian Bonito *Sarda australis*
Barred Javelin *Pomadasyds kaakan*
Blue Morwong *Nemadactylus valenciennesi*
Bronze Whaler *Carcharhinus brachyurus*
Brownstripe Snapper *Lutjanus vitta*
Burrowing Blackfish (Sea Cucumber) *Actinopyga spinea*
Champagne Crab *Hypothalassia acerba*
Cobia *Rachycentron canadum*
Crystal Crab *Chaceon albus*

Eastern Shovelnose Ray *Aptychotrema rostrata*
Golden Perch *Macquaria ambigua*
Greenback Flounder *Rhombosolea tapirina*
Hammer Octopus *Octopus australis*
Longfin Eel *Anguilla reinhardtii*
Longspined Sea Urchin *Centrostephanus rodgersii*
Ocean Sand Crab *Ovalipes australiensis*
Redspot King Prawn *Melicertus longistylus*
Ruby Snapper *Etelis carbunculus*
Sea Sweep *Scorpius aequipinnis*
Shortspined Sea Urchin *Heliocidaris erythrogramma*
Southern Shortfin Eel *Anguilla australis*
Striped Trumpeter *Latris lineata*
Stripey Snapper *Lutjanus carponotatus*
Swallowtail *Centroberyx lineatus*
Teraglin *Atractoscion aequidens*
Trumpeter Whiting *Sillago maculata*
Western Blue Groper *Achoerodus gouldii*
Western Rock Octopus *Octopus sp. cf tetricus* **F**



Seafood Industry Australia (SIA) has launched the 'Eat Seafood, Australia!' campaign and Fish Finder directory encouraging consumers to support the local seafood sector. The national marketing campaign is being supported with \$4 million in funding from the Federal Government, announced 22 June 2020.

The Fish Finder directory has been designed to help consumers find and purchase fresh or cooked Australian seafood online or direct from retailers, and is available at SIA's website.

SIA acting CEO Veronica Papacosta says many commercial fishers and fishmongers have diversified their businesses to offer delivery or easy collection methods to help get Australian seafood into homes.

"The directory is a simple way for the community to support fishers without even leaving their couch," she says. The campaign also encourages people to share seafood meal posts on social media, with the hashtag **#EatSeafoodAustralia**. **F**
More information <https://seafoodindustryaustralia.com.au>



RECREATIONAL FISHERS JOIN HABITAT INITIATIVE

An \$8 million initiative to improve coastal and estuarine fishing experiences will provide new opportunities for recreational fishers to become involved in efforts to preserve and improve fish habitats.

The new national Fisheries Habitat Restoration (FHR) Program aims to “support more sustainable and productive fisheries through the improvement of health and functioning of fish habitats while working with local recreational fishing groups”.

Recreational fishers have long recognised the need to restore fish habitats. More than half of all Australians live within seven kilometres of the coast, with urbanisation pressure and development activities increasingly contributing to habitat degradation.

However, when coastal and estuarine habitats are healthy, they provide critical habitat and nursery grounds for a huge array of fish, mollusc and shellfish species.

The FHR Program is administered by the fisheries branch of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. Applications for projects are being reviewed, with the projects to be completed by June 2023.

This initiative comes at a time when increased efforts to support fish habitats are much needed, following extensive drought and bushfires across large parts of Australia. **F**

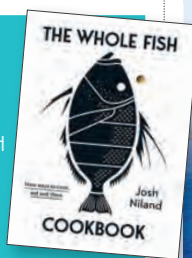
For more information about projects approved, visit the Regional Land Partnerships (RLP) website: www.nrm.gov.au/national-landcare-program

WHOLE FISH CHEF WINS BOOK AWARD

Sydney chef Josh Niland has won the James Beard Book of the Year Award for *The Whole Fish Cookbook*, which was published last year by Hardie Grant.

He is the first Australian to win the award from the US-based James Beard Foundation, which is a non-profit organisation that focuses on fostering chefs and other food leaders to share diverse and sustainable food cultures. The foundation has been operating for more than 30 years.

Josh Niland was also the winner of the Restaurant and Professional Book Award category, which put him in the running for the Book of the Year. He runs the restaurant St Peter and the retail outlet the Fish Butchery in Paddington, Sydney, with a focus on using every part of the fish. **F**



MOVERS AND ...

Deputy chair of FRDC **Colin Buxton** has been named an Emeritus Professor in recognition of his significant contributions to the University of Tasmania, including leadership of Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute (TAFI) and at the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS). This is a great achievement and well deserved.

John Barry, senior communications advisor at Australian Eggs, has taken a new job at the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

Adam Main, general manager of Primary Industries and Regions

SA Aquaculture, Policy and Environment has joined CH4 South Australia, a global initiative aimed at cutting methane emissions from livestock agriculture using seaweed byproduct.

Lyn Fragar AO has been appointed as the new independent chair of the Rural Safety and Health Alliance (RSHA). She follows in the footsteps of previous chair, **Patrick Murphy**.

Martina Doblin has been appointed as CEO and director of the Sydney Institute of Marine Science (SIMS), with inaugural CEO **Peter Steinberg** stepping down after 11 years in the role.

Tony Worby is the new CEO for the Minderoo Flourishing Oceans Program, having left his position as director of Oceans and Atmosphere at CSIRO. **Andreas Schiller** is currently acting in the role at CSIRO.

International food and agriculture executive **Anthony Williams** has been announced as the new managing director of the Grains Research and Development Corporation. He starts in the role in August, taking over from **Steve Jeffries**, who is retiring. **F**

BLUE ECONOMY CRC SCOPES RESEARCH NEEDS

The Blue Economy Cooperative Research Centre (BECRC) has launched 17 short-term industry-focused scoping projects that will guide the CRC’s research program.

The new projects are spread across the five BECRC program areas, involving collaboration with 40 participant organisations across the world, running until the end of 2020.

The scoping projects include research in the following areas:

- key challenges for offshore high-energy salmon aquaculture production;
- integrated offshore aquaculture and renewable energy infrastructure designs;
- types of marine energy conversion devices suited to offshore conditions that support energy export (such as hydrogen) and storage, as well as aquaculture applications;
- robust site selection procedures, and environmental and operational monitoring

- strategies including the application of remote-monitoring technologies;
- decision support tools for identifying trade-offs and synergies among emerging blue industries and human activities; and
- ethical, policy and regulatory frameworks for Australia’s emerging blue economy and systems for their integration.

BECRC chief executive officer John Whittington says the scoping projects will help the CRC understand existing technologies, solutions, knowledge and trends, and identify the major challenges and opportunities in each research area.

The total value of the scoping projects is more than \$2.3 million, with \$858,124 of funding direct from the BECRC, and \$1,445,317 of in-kind commitments from partners. **F**

A full list of approved projects is at www.blueeconomycrc.com.au/projects





Community connections key to coping with crisis

Indigenous commercial enterprises and cultural fishing to support local communities have continued as essential services during the coronavirus crisis

By **Ilaria Catizone**



Below left
Members of the Wallaga Bermagui men's group making their own boat and nets to fish on Yuin Sea Country.
Photo: Wally Stewart

Restrictions imposed to control COVID-19 might have spelled the end for some of Australia's fledgling Indigenous fishing enterprises, but drawing on local support, and with a view to the long-term, many have been able to preserve their operations, skills base and fisheries through the crisis.

The Maningrida community in the Northern Territory has been building a profitable fishing enterprise since its right to sell fish beyond its own community was legally recognised in 2017.

When the pandemic restrictions hit, the local crabbing season came to a premature halt as demand dried up with the cancellation of interstate flights and the closure of restaurants. Nearby communities they were supplying with fish also became inaccessible.

This is when the strong local connections in the Maningrida community came to the fore. "People in our community started asking for fish," explains Clément Bresson, who is the enterprise

development manager for the Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation in Maningrida.

"So we started selling to them via Facebook and word of mouth, then later formalised the interactions via an online ordering system. Now we are offering home delivery as well," he says. The enterprise supplies Barramundi fillets, Mullet, Queenfish and a few Mud Crabs.

While it is not planning to continue home delivery in the long-term, the local community support has helped the venture to survive the current difficult times.

Wallaga Lake

Community looking after its people has also helped the Wallaga Lake community at Bermagui in southern New South Wales pull through the crisis.

In March this year, the NSW Aboriginal Fishing Rights Group was given legal permission to access sea country and fish to sustain the local community.

"We built a boat and a net by hand, as my father taught me," says Wally Stewart, who led the initiative in Yuin Country. "This brought the community together to fish and share the catch."

With social distancing restrictions, the Yuin cultural commercial fishing crew is now fishing on its own, without community members being able to help pull the net in on the beach. It is a small setback, says Wally Stewart, but the fish netting is still helping to inspire the youngest generation and the harvest is shared amongst community members. He says this provides an essential source of protein, iodine and vitamins, especially for those who struggle to afford healthy foods on incomes below the poverty line, such as some Elders.

"Our community members who are using the net on the lake have the right to do so under Section 211 of the *Native Title Act [1993]* because they are all traditional owners of Yuin Country," Wally Stewart says. "But recently we have also obtained the NSW Department of Primary Industries Section 37 permit. This allows us to net the lake once a week without worrying about being arrested for carrying out our traditional practices.

"This has had enormous mental health and community building effects for us, making us more resilient to face adversity together, such as this pandemic."

South Australia

In South Australia, the Indigenous Pipi enterprise Kuti Co has fared well, using local labour and essentially fishing to order.

"We planned for the worst as we feared we might get shut down," says Kevin Kropinyeri, director of Kuti Co, which is also a shareholder of the Goolwa Pipi Co. "But the impact of COVID-19 on our operations wasn't as bad as we envisaged."

Keeping in touch with customers to carefully match the harvest levels to demand was crucial, particularly as key markets in Sydney closed and restaurants buying their catch adjusted to provide takeaway services only. Demand has remained relatively strong for their product, and it is a low-input fishery – no fuel or sea-going crew required. Both are factors that have helped Kuti Co to manage through the crisis. **F**



Seafood sector steps up to feed those in need

A silver lining to the hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has been the chance for the food service sector to showcase quality Australian fish and seafood as part of its extraordinary effort to provide healthy meals to people in dire straits

By **Bianca Nogrady**

Five million Australians every year experience food insecurity; sometimes all it takes is an unexpectedly large bill, a cut to working hours, a health issue or a car in need of repair and suddenly a person is faced with the distressing choice of paying for food or paying the rent.

That was before the COVID-19 pandemic. Foodbank Australia, a food relief organisation, says since the onset of the crisis the number of people needing help has increased by 50 per cent. “We’ve had the economic impacts of a lot more people being put out of work with very minimal notice,” says Jacqui Payne, national program manager of agriculture for Foodbank.

The hospitality sector has been hit particularly

hard as social distancing restrictions have closed venues across the country, or reduced them to take-away only. Many hospitality staff have also been unable to access JobSeeker or JobKeeper payments because they are on working visas that mean they are ineligible, but also they cannot work in other industries because their visas are tied to their sponsoring employers.

People working in the seafood sector are among those affected. Seafood Industry Australia acting CEO Veronica Papacosta says the organisation is trying to have fishers included in the JobKeeper support program: “A lot of people in the industry missed out on JobKeeper payments due to the style of employment in the industry.”

Meal service

In these difficult times, the seafood and hospitality industries are among those stepping up to support their colleagues, communities and fellow humans who are struggling. Whether it is providing produce at or below cost, donating it entirely or providing free meals, these helpers have been all that is standing between many people and hunger.

Chef Neil Perry’s staff are accustomed to creating exquisitely constructed plates of food, each item carefully positioned to create an edible work of art. Now they’re working with huge vats of hundreds of litres of food, producing meals that are handed out for free in Sydney and Melbourne to thousands of unemployed hospitality staff, students and



Left Chef Ian Curley, of French Saloon in Melbourne, handing out freshly made paella.

Photo: Penny Stephens, *The Age*

Below right Foodbank Australia worker Morgan Deans with donated seafood, used to help provide meals for those in need. Photo: Foodbank

those who have found themselves on the edge of survival during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The initiative is backed by Rockpool Dining Group's charitable arm – the Rockpool Foundation – with help from the general public through donations of money and produce. The seafood industry has been helping out with donations of fresh seafood. Meals are also being provided through services such as Foodbank and OzHarvest.

The initiative has been growing steadily towards a target of 1500 to 2000 meals a day in Sydney and 1000 in Melbourne.

On a smaller scale, Brisbane also pitched in with 'Help our Hospo' events in May and June. The Fish Factory provided the space and executive chef of Stokehouse Q, Ollie Hansford, organised fellow chefs to prepare 300 free, ready-to-cook, two-serve dinner packs. He says they opted for a simpler program for further events, providing less-structured seafood hampers with a range of fish and other ingredients for those in need to cook at home. Ollie Hansford says seafood suppliers had been incredibly generous with their donations, which included Ora King Salmon, Fraser Isle Spanner Crab and Petuna Ocean Trout, as well as clams, Pipis and octopus.

Supply packs

Other seafood suppliers have also been organising food handout programs. In Melbourne, seafood wholesaler Clamms Seafood has been providing free boxes of mixed seafood to hospitality workers who have lost their jobs or are 'doing it tough'. The idea took root when the company saw Sydney-based seafood retailer Poulos Brothers had started a program.

"Our hospitality industry was suffering and, despite us also facing difficult times, we wanted to support the industry that has supported us for over 30 years," says Stephanie Kaparos, CEO of Clamms Seafood. "We called suppliers, they were really quick to jump on board – it all came together in a matter of days."

All the produce in the boxes is donated either by Clamms Seafood or by other suppliers, and the list of those suppliers is huge: Humpty Doo Barramundi, Huon and Tassal salmon, Petuna salmon and trout, Cloudy Bay clams, Ora King Salmon, Advance mussels, Blue Harvest, and even

"It's emotional to see the sheer number of people that will come and line up and wait for food to create some meals. The hospitality workers have been very emotional, and we've had a lot of people in tears."

Stephanie Kaparos, CEO Clamms Seafood

non-seafood produce such as olive oil, cheese, bread and chips from suppliers such as Levantine Hill and Hotel Agencies Hospitality Supplies.

It's been a rollercoaster experience for Clamms Seafood, which, as a supplier to the food service sector, is also suffering financial hardships from the pandemic.

"It's emotional to see the sheer number of people that will come and line up and wait for food to create some meals," Stephanie Kaparos says. "The hospitality workers have been very emotional and we've had a lot of people in tears."

Seafood donations

Northern Territory company Humpty Doo Barramundi had been trying to work out how it could donate fish to food charities such as Foodbank even before COVID-19 struck, says Tarun Richards, co-owner and brand manager of Humpty Doo. But because it sells whole fish, the challenge was how it could package those donations.

When COVID-19 struck, Foodbank contacted suppliers such as Humpty Doo and offered to cover some of the costs of processing and delivering produce. Meanwhile, Humpty Doo and food processor and distributor PFD Food Services worked out a way that Humpty Doo's produce could be processed and frozen so Foodbank could use the supply.

It is now processed into portions and bagged to Foodbank's requirements, and frozen for delivery to Foodbank in a few states, says Miles Toomey, chief marketing and sales officer at Humpty Doo. "It's two Australian family

businesses helping Australian families, because without PFD this would not have happened."

The company is also providing fish to Clamms Seafood for its boxes for hospitality workers, and to Sydney chef Colin Fassnidge – who is providing free meals from his Sydney restaurant Banksia Bistro to those in need. It is also hoping to assist Neil Perry and the Rockpool Foundation with food donations.

Another Australian aquaculture company, Indian Ocean Fresh Australia, has provided Yellowtail Kingfish to Foodbank at no cost, which owner and manager Erica Starling describes as a "triple win" for the company. "Firstly, we were able to provide healthy, freshly harvested and frozen fish to Foodbank Australia for their customers," she says. "Secondly, as a small business, we were able to generate a little extra work and pay for our own staff who were directly impacted by the sudden closure of the hospitality and food service sector." And thirdly, she says, it has meant the company will be better able to optimally manage its biomass of fish.

Jacquie Payne from Foodbank says it has been exciting to be able to offer people a choice of quality Australian fish and seafood alongside the usual pantry staples that Foodbank provides.

"People who are going through food insecurity still deserve dignity of choice and access to quality fruit and vegetables and product," she says. "This is an opportunity to get some of the best quality Australian produce and fish through to those people who might otherwise have completely gone without." **F**





COVID-19 impacts global seafood markets

The devastating impacts of port closures and the shutdown of food service around the globe in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have highlighted the interconnectedness of seafood supply chains and the world more generally: we are all in this together

Seafood is one of the world's most traded commodities and Australia is a small cog in the huge wheel of international trade. However, it is clear that the impacts being felt across the globe have been similar to those facing our own seafood sector.

The United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) released its *Food Outlook – Biannual Report on Global Food Markets*, with a particular focus on the impacts of COVID-19. The FAO expects production from capture fishers will decline 2.0 per cent in 2020, with a 1.4 per cent decline for aquaculture. This will equate to a 5.8 per cent drop in the value of fisheries, or from US\$159.6 billion to US\$150.4 billion (www.fao.org).

Other impacts include logistical challenges caused by border and transport shutdowns, the movement of workers, market access disruptions, and changing consumer needs. Aquaculture operators

around the world have been challenged by rising prices for feed. Processing sectors have closed due to the reduction or loss of consumer demand, and this has had a significant impact on post-harvest workers, the majority of whom, globally, are women.

A significant number of large seafood companies around the world have also been directly impacted by COVID-19 through infections amongst their workforces, both on vessels and in processing facilities. There have been widespread incidences affecting countries such as Ghana, Norway, Chile and the US, as well as companies including Trident Seafoods, Ocean Beauty Seafoods, Peter Pan Seafoods, High Liner Foods, Pacific Seafood, Thai Union, Bornstein Seafoods, Bristol Seafood and Blue Harvest Fisheries.

On a more positive note, as the crisis hit, countries around the world officially declared fishing and aquaculture to be essential services. And while the seafood industry has seen significant disruption due to its reliance on food service, there remains cause for optimism.

Asian nations are ahead of many others in terms of easing restrictions designed to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and there are early signs of consumer demand for seafood returning. Denmark-based whitefish processor Espersen has restarted production of

McDonald's Fillet-O-Fish after two months of shutdown. Other major fish producers have reported increased sales throughout the crisis with farmed Atlantic Salmon deemed virtually 'recession proof'.

Finally, the global seafood industry is also contributing to the race for effective COVID-19 treatments. A Norwegian biotech firm has announced plans for phase two of trials to clinically assess its salmon oil brand OmeGo as a potential treatment for patients with COVID-19-related acute respiratory distress syndrome.

Below are some further updates on the impacts of COVID-19 on the seafood sector around the world.

The US

The seafood supply chain in the US comprises about 1.7 million jobs and \$145 billion in sales. Of the US's \$2 trillion stimulus package, about \$300 million is being distributed to states to pass along to the seafood community.

Retail sales continue to hold fairly well and there have been some surprises with consumers embracing a wide variety of species to cook in their homes.

Some retailers halted their fresh offerings, but with increased demand they realised this category would be highly profitable; they quickly made their fresh

Below
Urk, Netherlands, May 2020: fishing boats in the harbour prepare to go back out fishing after the global COVID-19 outbreak.
Photo: 123rf



A Norwegian biotech firm has announced plans for phase two of trials to clinically assess its salmon oil brand OmeGo as a potential treatment for patients with COVID-19-related acute respiratory distress syndrome.



seafood available again and redistributed staff to accommodate the demand.

Food service demand has dropped by 90 to 95 per cent in many areas. Given that this sector makes up around 70 per cent of seafood sales, the drop is a significant issue.

Initially there were concerns amongst consumers that the coronavirus could be transmitted from food, including seafood. The US Food and Drug Administration released a short video assuring people that food was safe and not a vector for COVID-19.

Seafood producers have diverted product normally intended for food service to retail, which has required efforts to relabel and repackage appropriately.

For many producers in the major seafood production regions along the US Pacific north-west coast, boats had already completed fishing for the season when the effects of the pandemic emerged. This timing was fortunate, as it was established early on that the disease on boats was a serious threat, and the conclusion of the fishing season lessened this risk.

An infectious disease working group was set up, with medical, government and industry representatives, to establish necessary quarantine protocols and to prevent crews returning to shore, or boarding vessels for extended

fishing periods, being misinformed.

In June it was reported that outbreaks of the virus had been detected onboard fishing vessels, including an American Seafoods vessel, where 85 crew members were confirmed as infected.

Seafood Expo North America, North America's largest seafood trade exposition, has been rescheduled from earlier in the year and is now expected to take place from 22 to 24 September 2020 in Boston.

European Union (EU)

Across the EU, 50 per cent of coastal fleets ceased fishing during the crisis, with many preferring to remain in lockdown for health safety.

Although many large vessels have ceased fishing, artisanal fishers have continued to operate, taking orders by phone and delivering to homes. Those that are still fishing include deep sea fishers and those fishing for pelagic species around Africa. However, crews are remaining onboard rather than coming onshore to avoid infection.

Prices for seafood have dropped significantly. About half of the EU's seafood production is normally sold to food service and, with the closing of restaurants, these sales have dried up. High-value seafood has been the most heavily affected. Demand for seafood from

fishmongers and other retail outlets has mostly remained stable.

With fishing and aquaculture among the hardest-hit sectors, the EU has provided emergency financial aid to operators. Amendments have also been made to the European Maritime and Fund to allow for the more flexible allocation of resources.

Throughout the pandemic, transport across the EU has remained steady. However, air transportation has become more challenging with greatly reduced capacity.

Euronews has explored the impact of the COVID-19 crisis in the article 'Coronavirus: supporting Europe's battered fishing industry', at www.euronews.com.

Norway

Production in Norway initially declined by about 15 per cent due to industry workers being in lockdown, but the impact has gradually decreased and production rates have lifted.

About 85 to 90 per cent of Norwegian-produced seafood is exported. When the spread of COVID-19 started to impact sales, producers quickly began freezing more product, putting more in storage as markets became inaccessible.

The Norwegian Government has provided funding for companies with a 30 per cent drop in sales, but few seafood →

Above
Farmed salmon,
Norway.
Photo: Shutterstock



companies have been affected to this extent.

Demand for Norwegian seafood has become more unpredictable, with greater demand from some markets and reduced demand in others, contingent on varied changes to food service and retail surges across the region. For example, while exports of whole Atlantic Salmon have dropped, there has been greater demand for fillets – reflecting the switch in demand from food service to retail.

Seafood companies have been hiring people who lost their jobs in other affected industries.

The UK

Many vessels in the UK have ceased fishing as a result of lockdown restrictions and decreases in seafood demand due to food service closures.

The consumer-focused ‘Sea for yourself’ marketing campaign run by Seafish is encouraging UK consumers to opt for locally caught seafood and providing them with information on how to access it.

Seafish is also educating seafood producers on ways to reach consumers directly while markets such as food service and export are disrupted. This includes opportunities like quayside sales. Industry is also working with government agencies to relax labelling requirements to ease the pressure on producers during this difficult time.

Below
Docked fishing boats.
Photo: 123f



New Zealand

While much of the sector was able to continue operating as an essential service, at the height of the national lockdown, up to half the New Zealand fishing fleet ceased fishing.

For the companies that did continue to operate, strict lockdown measures were enforced, demanding strong and fast compliance in relation to social distancing, health and hygiene requirements.

The export of live and chilled product to China was severely affected by lockdown laws, although this has recovered somewhat with the New Zealand Government providing airfreight support to help seafood producers and other premium product suppliers continue to access international markets.

During the shutdown period, only major retailers such as supermarkets remained open, leaving consumers with limited access to fresh seafood, which was mostly replaced with cold storage and tinned items. Food service was completely closed, greatly reducing the demand for seafood. As New Zealand eases its restrictions, some of this demand is returning.

Japan

Japan’s fishing industry faced some critical situations when restrictions on entry to foreign ports prevented landing operations and crew replacements.

The decrease in demand for eating out and a reduction in inbound and domestic tourists have reduced the consumption of seafood and led to falling market prices, especially for high-end fish such as tuna.

Exports of marine products stagnated and business talks with foreign buyers have been challenging.

The Japanese Government has provided support to the industry via its COVID-19 Emergency Economic Package. This has included a range of measures to ensure employment and business continuity within the sector, providing support for foreign skilled workers and for the storage of excess catch. Japan’s seafood exports have also received government support.

Industry associations have focused on increasing demand for fishery products during this period by promoting direct online sales, providing seafood for school lunches and launching marketing initiatives.

Global aquaculture

The FAO’s *Food Outlook* reports that a deteriorating outlook for farmed seafood following restaurant closures has seen aquaculture producers delaying harvests and reducing stocking targets. In Asia, shrimp farm harvests that normally begin in April have been delayed until June/July, with this forecast to reduce production in India by 30 to 40 per cent. India was the largest exporter of frozen seawater shrimp in 2019, with a 24.9 per cent share of the market, worth \$4.3 billion.

The contraction of aquaculture production is expected to reduce the demand for feeds, although with COVID-19 now under better control in China, it is expected Chinese demand for fishmeal will strengthen as the sector begins to rebound.

However, in Peru – the leading global fishmeal and fish oil producer – the Government has introduced a number of preventative measures that have direct implications for the anchovy industry, which underpins meal and oil supplies. The FAO says measures enforced include restrictions on boats entering ports, physical distancing policies for crew members and a directive to prohibit boarding for people over the age of 60. These factors will all lead to a decline in fishmeal and fish oil production in 2020, with short-term price increases as a result of material shortages from Peru.

WorldFish

Internationally, non-profit research organisation WorldFish leads efforts to reduce poverty and hunger by improving fisheries and aquaculture. It is concerned the impacts of COVID-19 will be particularly dire for poor and vulnerable people living in developing countries.

Director general of WorldFish Gareth Johnstone says the economic fallout is expected to push more than half a billion people into poverty, with communities in Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and the Middle East expected to suffer the most. The impacts will disproportionately affect women and girls.

Its website, www.worldfishcenter.org, provides ongoing updates on these impacts and on initiatives unfolding in the regions with which it works, such as Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Timor-Leste, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Myanmar and the Philippines. **F**

Walker Seafood
Australia owners
Pavo and Heidi
Walker with a whole
Yellowfin Tuna being
hailed off their boat
in Mooloolaba.
Photo: Paul Harris

In adapting their business models to meet new market conditions, fishers are putting premium Australian fish onto the tables of consumers at home instead of in restaurants

By Bianca Nogrady

The first clue Heidi Walker had that something was wrong was when she happened to check her phone in the middle of the night in mid-March.

“My customers in the US were sending me messages saying ‘do not send us more fish’ and ‘we can’t take any more fish, we’re going into lockdown,’” says the co-owner of the Queensland-based tuna company Walker Seafoods. “We had five boats at sea, all catching fish, so I knew we had to do something because I had a lot of fish coming in and at this point there was no opportunity to send fish anywhere.”

The COVID-19 axe fell overnight and it was terrifying, Heidi Walker says. But rather than panic, the company threw themselves into finding a solution.

Local markets

The first thing Walker Seafoods did was set up a pop-up shop outside their factory in Mooloolaba. It attracted the attention of local media and soon was flooded by locals wanting to get their hands on – and teeth into – the kind of premium produce that is normally only sold into exclusive export markets, such as the US and Japan, and high-end restaurants in Asia and Australia.

Their second move was to contact Coles supermarkets, with the help of John Susman from seafood agency Fishtales. Within a week and a half, they had worked out a deal to get Walker’s Yellowfin Tuna into 150 of Coles’ stores. It sold out within hours and more deliveries are now on their way.

“We realised we were onto something good,” Heidi Walker says, of the new →

Seafood rides new market waves



market opportunity, which the company plans to continue in the longer-term.

Walker Seafoods may be one of the rare good-news stories of the COVID-19 pandemic. But amongst all the devastation caused by the pandemic and its associated shutdown of export markets, hospitality and tourism, businesses are doing what they can to adapt.

Fisher Bryan Denny from Ocean Blue Diving in Tasmania runs a small two-pronged operation harvesting Abalone and Periwinkles, and has found this diversification has really helped see him through so far. When his Abalone business stopped in January, as China closed its borders, he was still able to fish for Periwinkles that he supplies to a west Sydney restaurant. Then, as the restaurant also had to close later in March, China began opening up, so he switched back to the Abalone business.

The Northern Territory seafood industry, like many others, has been impacted by the loss of the hospitality market, as restaurants in its towns and cities closed and Lunar New Year events – traditionally a boom time for fishers – were called off.

“Some fishers have stopped fishing because they physically can’t move the volume they need to,” says Katherine Winchester, CEO of the Northern Territory Seafood Council. Others are taking advantage of the downtime to do repairs or engage in some business reflection, but “that obviously can’t go on forever”, she says.

Some are trying to move product within the local community, either direct to consumers or through existing retailers. Local retailers, in particular, have been offering their support to help fishers to sell their wares. Others are making the move from fresh product to frozen, selling both direct to consumers and through existing retail channels. Several fisheries in

the Northern Territory already had good links with supermarkets, which Katherine Winchester says has been “a real lifeline”.

“Businesses are looking for ways to diversify and find new markets, essentially to try and create some movement rather than just opting for storage and waiting till things open up again,” she says.

Freezer conversion

Taroona Pty Ltd & Mackerel Online is one company taking this approach. It operates in the Spanish Mackerel troll line fishery off Darwin and has two boats – one supplying fresh fish and the other fitted with freezers to supply frozen product. Ordinarily the business sells into the pubs and restaurants of Melbourne, but since the pandemic both demand and price have plummeted.

As a result, the company made the expensive decision to put a freezer and cryovac facility on its ‘fresh’ boat and to focus on smaller packs. It built a freezer outside its shopfront in Darwin, put solar panels on the roof to run it, and opened up a new virtual shop called Mackerel Online. All up, owner Norm Hedditch reckons he has spent \$35,000 to \$40,000 on the conversion. But he is glad he did it.

“I’m really happy with the way it’s going,” he says. Frozen product now coming off both boats is selling online, through his retail shop, and is also sent to

Queensland and Western Australia to supply the fish and chip market. The move to frozen has increased turnover and helped the business turn a profit.

As well as selling his own one and two-kilogram frozen packs of fish, Norm Hedditch is expanding the produce available in his own shop to include local prawns, Barramundi and King Threadfin. He also started a home delivery service, which was going well but has dropped off since the lockdowns started lifting.

“It has given us a challenge, but everybody’s still employed,” he says.

The retail shift

The shift from wholesale and hospitality into consumer retail can be a challenging one, and not all are able to make that transition as smoothly, according to Fishtalet’s John Susman.

“In some instances they’ve approached it well and in others instances they’ve approached it quite naively in terms of the lack of recognition for what retail channels look like and how they operate and what are the demands.”

For example, a fisher who is used to having a five-minute transaction with a chef for an order in the hundreds of kilograms might find it a very different experience to deal with the questions of a home cook ordering two fillets for dinner that night.

Right
Walker Seafoods’ pop-up shop outside their factory in Mooloolaba.
Photo: Walker Seafoods

“Businesses are looking for ways to diversify and find new markets, essentially to try and create some movement rather than just opting for storage and waiting till things open up again.”

Heidi Walker, Walker Seafoods





Above Companies such as Taroona are finding new markets in order to keep trading. Photos: Taroona Fish and Mackerel Online

“You need to have recognised levels of food safety plans, of record-keeping from wharf to store, and you may need to have services of a third party to assist in processing and distribution,” John Susman says. It also means changing packaging – for example, from one kilogram of crab to 100 grams – and complying with consumer labelling requirements.

But the upheaval of the COVID-19 pandemic can also provide opportunity, both for fishers and retailers, says Heidi Walker.

“Increase your consumption of Australian seafood, and now’s the time to do it because the price has never been better,” she says.

Fast-moving marketing

It is certainly a message that Australian prawn producers are keen to get out there.

Immediately after COVID-19 shut everything down, the collective of prawn producers

behind the Love Australian Prawns campaign held an emergency meeting to see how they could salvage the situation.

“We did a quick-turnaround social campaign to encourage people to go to the seafood department of their supermarket and ask for a box of frozen prawns,” says Ben Hale from digital marketing agency Adpower, which came up with the Love Australian Prawns campaign. That was just

the first step in what has been a nimble and fast-adapting social media campaign making the most of changing consumer behaviour during the pandemic.

The campaign crafted posts to take advantage of consumers making their own meals while working from home and the rise in home baking. As the lockdown stretched out, the campaign encouraged consumers to try complex and diverse cuisines from India and Thailand.

“Over six to eight weeks we managed to create as much consumer engagement as we did over the entire summer,” Ben Hale says.

Not everyone can pivot their business model so quickly. Oysters are one industry that has taken a significant hit from COVID-19, with John Susman estimating the industry is down by 60 to 70 per cent. The challenge is that oysters are largely seen as a premium product that is enjoyed in restaurants, not at home.

“The industry hasn’t done a huge amount of work in terms of teaching consumers how to enjoy oysters at home on a Saturday night,” he says. But producers are adapting and some brands have been working on significant public campaigns over the past couple of months to try to change that.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, John Susman believes things could change for the better for Australian fishers, retailers and consumers. However, “the domestic market still needs to be encouraged”, he says. “My fear is that the producers themselves, as soon as international markets reopen, will forget about the domestic market because they’ll think it’s just too much work.”

The true impact of COVID-19 is still unfolding and likely will be for some time, says Katherine Winchester. Some fishers are already starting to open up their businesses – for example, mud crabbers are looking to get back out and fishing in the coming days, despite the lack of airfreight.

While restaurants and cafes have reopened around the country, the restrictions on customer numbers may mean reopening is not an economic prospect for some. Despite this, Katherine Winchester says she is feeling quite optimistic about the future – of the Northern Territory seafood industry at least.

“A lot is yet to unfold for us,” she says. “We’re looking to boost that confidence wherever we can and making sure we can adapt and come out of this as strong as possible.” **F**



Meeting the home dining challenge

By Larissa Dubecki

Few are unaffected by havoc the coronavirus crisis has wrought and many in Australia's seafood sector have been hard hit. For some, the necessary pivot in their business focus as they work to keep trading has been more of a pirouette, while for others the result has been less poetic. But for all involved, from fishers to wholesalers and retailers to restaurateurs, lessons are being learned about now outmoded industry sureties and new realities.

FISH magazine asked a cross-section of customer-facing industry players to share their insights into the trials and tribulations – and even the triumphs – experienced during the coronavirus crisis.



Above
Melbourne Food Squad,
a home delivery platform
developed by James
Marinopoulos.

Premium partnerships

Red Coral Seafood Melbourne, Victoria

It took the COVID-19 pandemic for James Marinopoulos to realise one of his business dreams.

"We've always wanted to do home delivery," says the owner of Red Coral Seafoods, a wholesale-focused business that started in 1982 in Melbourne's Bayswater. "But the restaurant side was growing too fast, killing the idea. Before you know it, eight years have gone by and nothing's happened."

Within a week of restaurant closures enforced as part of virus containment measures, Red Coral had lost 90 per cent of its trade. "I went home, developed a website and called some friends," he says. The outcome was Food Squad, a home delivery platform enlisting a group of wholesalers

and producers into a one-stop premium home delivery shop. And the result? "It's gone ballistic."

Part of the appeal, James Marinopoulos believes, lies in the marketplace concept that means households do not have to deal with multiple deliveries. Above all, it has proven that people at home want top-notch produce. Mother's Day, for example, saw Food Squad deliver 300 lobsters. Giant Scarlet Prawns are another, more everyday, case in point – Food Squad has been struggling to keep up supply at around \$90 a kilo. New Zealand's premium Ora King Salmon is outselling the Tasmanian product, and Glacier 51 Patagonian Toothfish is selling "by the truckload".

"People are sending us emails saying 'please don't discontinue this when it's over'," says James Marinopoulos. "And we won't. Why would we?"

redcoralseafood.com.au
melbournefoodsquad.com



Harley & John's Seafood

Consumers embrace novelty

Harley & John's Seafood Wollongong, NSW

When the coronavirus struck, Wollongong seafood supplier Grant Logue (pictured above) decided it was an opportune time to act on a home delivery model he had been contemplating for a while. "It had been on my mind and this gave it a real push," says the owner of Harley & John's Seafood of his plan to band together with local food businesses to synchronise deliveries.

Grant Logue was the driving force behind the enterprise, and the one to call it quits when glitches in the system – most significantly, problems getting the technology up and running – undermined his confidence that the service would be as reliable as the home delivery market demands. "Basically, I didn't want to rush it and wreck it because it's something that I really think will work if I have enough time to spend on it," he says. "I will revisit it in the future, hopefully within six months, when things aren't so crazy."

That is another way of saying the retail side has been strong. Harley & John's is selling double the number of oysters they do at ordinary times and home consumers have shown themselves to be more adventurous in their species choices. "I put something up on Instagram about scampi and had about 10 inquiries from people who had never had it before but were keen to try it. I think this whole coronavirus episode is going to change eating habits, even when restaurants reopen. Consumers have shown they're going to be a bit less cautious in their seafood choices."

harleyjohnseafood.com.au

Direct from the fishers

Fair Fish South Australia

A novel business model in a time of the novel coronavirus could have been a recipe for disaster, but Fair Fish has been making quiet inroads into its twin ethos of getting a fair price for fishers and promoting the bounty of South Australia's oceans – including secondary species – to restaurants and the public.

"Coronavirus certainly made us think outside the box very quickly," says Bart Butson (pictured below), chairman of Port Adelaide-based Fair Fish. Started in 2017 as an industry and government-backed initiative, Fair Fish was only weeks into its evolution as a fledgling corporation, majority-owned by fishers and selling 'shares' of their catch to the public, when the shutdown struck.

The Fair Fish model had been based on the idea of a public marketplace – "once a week pickups, meeting the fishers, all the romance of whole fresh fish packed in ice" – until stymied by the new realities of social interaction.

With its restaurant customers no longer buying, Fair Fish quickly rejigged its website into an online shopfront, and news about its new Adelaide home delivery service was sent out via email, Facebook and Instagram, including paid posts. The number of home customers registered has increased from about 260 to 700 and the 40 kilograms of seafood sold directly into households each week now averages several hundred.

Bart Butson says the home delivery model has helped Fair Fish weather the crisis, but he is unsure if home delivery will continue once the real-life marketplace resumes. He says the personal connection between fishers and customers is at the heart of Fair Fish. "It really strengthens the social licence aspect that Fair Fish is all about. It may not be the core of our business as we had hoped, but it's still important."

fairfishsa.com.au

Below Bart Butson
Photo: Josh Geelen



Fair Fish



Appellation Oysters

Home-shucked quality

Appellation Oysters New South Wales

Premium live oysters can be a tricky beast in the home delivery market. "If you send a box of 20 and one might be open because they're a live product or not stored correctly, then the customer wants to have their single oyster replaced," says Davin Charlesworth, general manager sales and marketing at Australia's Oyster Coast.

Before COVID-19 struck, times were already tough for the 50-odd oyster farms that stretch 1200 kilometres along New South Wales' east coast. "We had the fires then floods, with every estuary pretty much closed for a week or two, then the fear. It's the three fs," Davin Charlesworth says.

Keeping their premium brand Appellation Oysters in the market has been a game of incremental change rather than the big statement. The price for a five-dozen box was lowered to the same price per dozen as a 10-dozen box, and single-dozen-sized trays were included in each box to facilitate restaurants serving them as part of their home delivery model.

"We've resisted putting the product into supermarkets or any market that doesn't freshly shuck or have the same quality and serving standards," says Davin Charlesworth. →

Expectations have been temporarily lowered across the industry, he believes. Some restaurants that have continued to trade are selling Appellation Oysters at \$3 a piece, down from \$5, in order to be more relevant to the take-home market.

Plans to launch an 'Appellation @ Home' delivery model were temporarily on hold at the time of going to print, says Davin Charlesworth, thanks to the slow easing of COVID-19 restrictions. "Right now we are holding on the launch as we are seeing things open up in traditional channels ... We will probably progress without haste."

appellationoysters.com



Left Peter Manettas, of Manettas Seafood Market and ShoreTrade, providing successful e-commerce options. Photo: ShoreTrade



Left George Lucas (left), and John Christopoulos from Ocean Made, whose wholesale business pivoted to retail. Photo: Emily Weaving



"We had a small retail store for nearly 15 years next to our factory in Collingwood, and while it's around five or six per cent of the business, we've always had a strong name. We thought we'd branch out and deliver to people's houses."

The media generated by Ocean Made's home delivery move is testament to the calibre of Melbourne restaurants that use its produce, including Attica, Kisumé, Supernormal and Maha. For George Lucas, it was equally a promotional move to up retail sales. "In terms of turnover it doesn't come close to compensating for the wholesale side of things, but

with 14 to 15 vans on the road with our name written on the side, it's good for visibility."

Increasing their retail range has seen the addition of products such as Sea Urchin and Giant Scarlet Prawns, which have been successful, but George Lucas is unsure whether this marks a blip or a shift in purchasing habits. "People will go back to work and back to restaurants. Will they still have the time to cook so much at home? It's a hard one to answer right now."

oceanmade.com.au

Home deliveries raise profile

Ocean Made
Collingwood, Melbourne

The story of inner Melbourne-based Ocean Made Seafood is certainly not uncommon amid the coronavirus crisis. Because Ocean Made primarily wholesales to restaurants, business dropped 85 per cent almost overnight. For George Lucas, who founded the business with John Christopoulos in 1999, the only thing to do was pivot to retail.

"We had a small retail store for nearly 15 years next to our factory in Collingwood, and while it's around five or six per cent of the business, we've always had a strong name. We thought we'd branch out and deliver to people's houses."

George Lucas, Ocean Made

Diversifying online

Manettas Seafood Market/ShoreTrade
Online/national

As a seafood retailer operating solely on the web for the past three and a half years, Peter Manettas was in an excellent position to deal with the unprecedented surge in home delivery. "Being one of the first to go into that space was important to establish a strong brand that consumers trusted. We saw the B2C market was being ignored by the industry quite heavily, with the general assumption that Coles and Woolworths had home delivery all sewn up. Since COVID hit all we've seen is a bunch of retailers try to catch up, but there's a lot that goes into an online business."

The other string to his bow, the B2B business ShoreTrade, has also grown "exponentially".

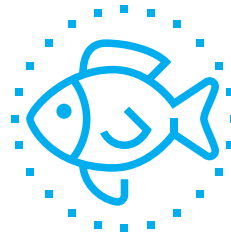
ShoreTrade was set up to let fishers and fisheries list product on an online marketplace with end-to-end cold chain logistics, and Peter Manettas says an already large database of buyers is now being served by a "hugely accelerated" number of sellers. For those sellers, he says, "COVID-19 has proven you can't rely on just one section of the market. When it initially hit in China you saw it in the lobster fisheries. They started coming to us and saying 'what other sections of the market have you got?'. We were able to turn it around and get it online and market it out to other areas. The smart players here are going to look at what went wrong and say 'my business model needs to be more robust.'" **F**
manettas.com.au
shoretrade.com



Freezers stocked, then fresh sales surge

New retail data examine how COVID-19 has affected domestic fish and seafood sales, providing opportunities to learn from the findings

By Catherine Norwood



KEY POINTS

In the past year the value of retail fish and seafood sales grew 7.3 per cent.

Frozen retail sales value increased 10.8 per cent, fresh sales value grew 5.9 per cent.

Frozen product sales by volume spiked by 26 per cent in March.

Non-supermarket retail sales value grew 18.4 per cent in April.

Fresh fish and seafood dominate the retail market in Australia, and data gathered during the COVID-19 restrictions show consumers paying more and buying a wider range of fresh product as they experiment with cooking at home.

However, frozen markets have continued to see strong growth, primarily as a result of consumers seeking to shore up their food supplies in the lead-up to the national lockdown in March.

Retail data from Nielsen Homescan clearly shows frozen seafood proved to be the go-to option – sales jumped by 26 per cent during March, while fresh product purchases plummeted in the same period.

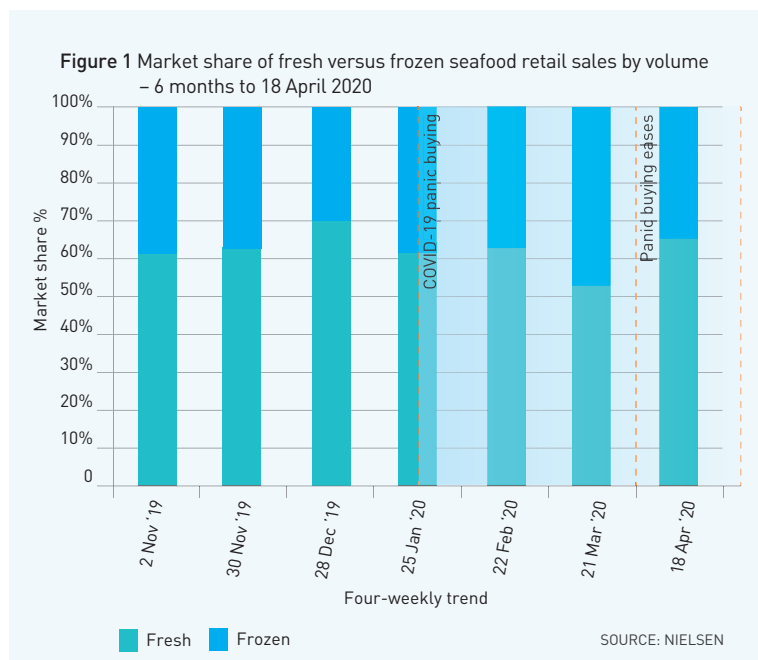
It suggests opportunities for the seafood sector to enter the frozen markets with products that households can reliably have on hand to deal with whatever may come their way.

The FRDC commissioned data from Nielsen Homescan to help verify the extent of the pandemic impacts on retail sales. It adds quantitative detail to the experiences of seafood sector stakeholders – many of which are reported throughout this issue of *FISH* magazine. The data also reveals consumer purchasing patterns at a national level.

The commissioned data focuses on two four-week periods ending 21 March and 18 April 2020, with trends data available over the past two years.

The March reporting period includes the tightening of community restrictions in response to COVID-19. The following period included the beginning of the national lockdown and the Easter weekend on 11 to 12 April.

From a retail perspective, March demonstrated continued panic buying and pantry stocking, which had started in February. The April period saw the resumption of more normal purchasing patterns. A major contributing factor in the shift of purchasing behaviour





was the closure of restaurants and increased spending on fresh food to cook at home.

The data indicates consumer thought processes around being ‘locked down’ and stocking up; fresh seafood is a ‘now’ purchase and frozen is a good future meal option.

While frozen seafood sales spiked during the March period, fresh seafood sales surged to a similar extent in the April period as consumers swapped from one type of product to another (Figure 1). This suggests overall seafood demand is relatively inelastic.

Nielsen’s associate director of retail client services, Neil Moody, says the fresh fish share of sales in the four weeks to 18 April were at the highest level ever reported outside the peak Christmas period. It appears this is driven by customers purchasing fresh product to cook at home.

Figure 2 shows how this peak in the four weeks to 18 April compares with the Christmas peaks in 2018 and 2019, as well as to the same period in 2019.

Expanded selection

A detailed look at different seafood categories, which combines both fresh and frozen product, also shows ‘other species’ performing strongly across both reporting periods, gaining market share (Figure 3) and a 14.7 per cent increase in value as sales.

‘Other species’ includes fish such as Tuna, Mackerel, trout and Sardines, and Neil Moody says the strong performance of this category suggests a willingness by consumers to try something different and experiment at home during the lockdown.

White fish, which is predominately sold as fillets and includes Basa, Flathead, snapper, Whiting and Ling, lost sales by volume during the April reporting period after a peak in March, but the value of sales continued to increase by six per cent compared to last year.

The comparison is based on a moving annual total, with sales averaged across the past 12 months against the same time the previous year.

Atlantic Salmon has maintained the largest market share by value, at 39.2 per cent, followed by prawns at 20.6 per cent; white fish at 18.3 per cent; other species at 13.7 per cent; Barramundi at 4.6 per cent; and crustaceans, mussels and Squid with a combined 3.6 per cent.

Neil Moody says Barramundi is also showing strong growth of 13.3 per cent in value and 11.9 per cent in volume over the past year. The frozen Barramundi category showed even faster growth in the April reporting period, as households increased overall consumption and continued to buy this species more often, although fresh product sales dropped more than 14 per cent.

Frozen prawns also showed faster growth in April, 13.7 per cent, driven by higher prices, with more households continuing to choose frozen product. There was a rebound of fresh prawn consumption coinciding with the Easter period.

The growth of frozen Atlantic Salmon sales also remained strong in April, up 14.4 per cent versus a year ago.

The fresh fish share of sales in the four weeks to 18 April were at the highest level ever reported outside the peak Christmas period. It appears this is driven by customers purchasing fresh product to cook at home.





Seafood sales outlets

The growth of sales from specialty seafood channels also increased during April – at four times the rate of supermarket sales, although from a much lower base.

The 12-month average to 18 April shows supermarkets captured 84.4 per cent of sales by value, with 16.4 per cent of sales through other outlets.

During April, other outlets increased their market share more than three points, to 19.5 per cent, although the supermarkets continued to dominate with the remaining 80.5 per cent of sales.

The increased market share for specialty stores was reflected in sharp sales growth – 18.4 per cent by value and 19.8 per cent by volume during the April period. Supermarket sales grew 4.6 per cent by value and 1.6 per cent by volume during the same four weeks.

National growth

Across the 12 months to 18 April, combined fresh and frozen retail sales averaged growth of 7.3 per cent in value and 6.9 per cent in volume.

In the four weeks to 21 March, when frozen seafood sales jumped, the growth of all fish and seafood sales was 7.5 per cent for both value and volume, compared to the same four-week period a year earlier.

The growth rate in the four weeks to 18 April was lower, at 7.0 per cent in value and 4.1 per cent in volume compared to the same four-week period in 2019, but showed increased prices being paid (Figure 4).

Neil Moody says the April data shows Queensland is leading the way – value increased by 12.8 per cent during the four-week period, while volume increased 7.5 per cent.

Western Australia is an anomaly in the rising value trend, with a decline of 5.3 per cent despite the volume of sales rising slightly, which reflects reduced sales of Atlantic Salmon as a result of freight restrictions (Figure 5).

Across the fish and seafood category, whole frozen seafood has continued to lead growth during the past year, incorporating both the pre-lockdown spike and the following drop in sales.

As at 18 April, average frozen product retail sales were increasing more quickly than fresh sales in terms of value, with growth of 10.8 per cent and 6.3 per cent by volume across the previous 12 months. In the same period, sales of fresh seafood had increased 5.9 per cent by value and 7.3 per cent by volume.

Data sourced from Nielsen Homescan – Australia includes a consumer panel of 10,000 households, which are demographically and geographically representative of Australian households. Each household electronically records its household purchases of all grocery goods, fresh and packaged, and continuously reports domestic purchases from all retail outlets. **F**

Figure 3 Market share of retail sales volume, by seafood category – 6 months to 18 April 2020

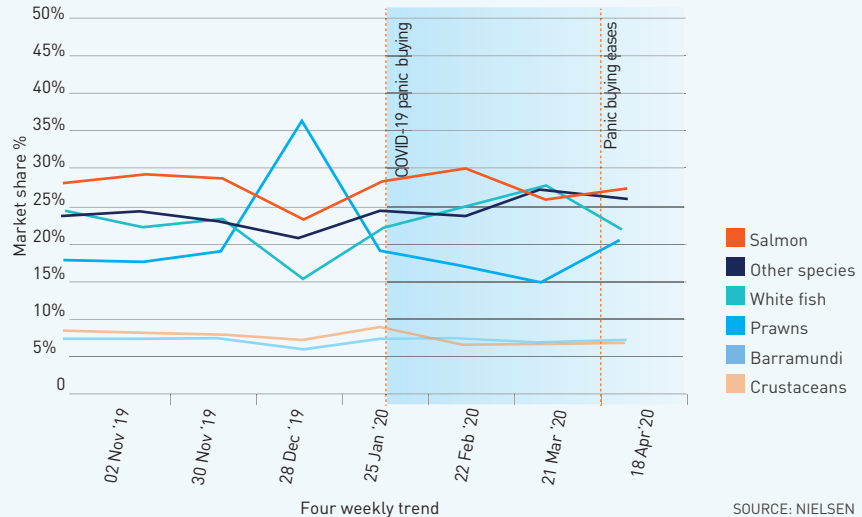


Figure 4 National seafood retail sales growth and market share – 4 weeks to 18 April 2020 compared to same period in 2019

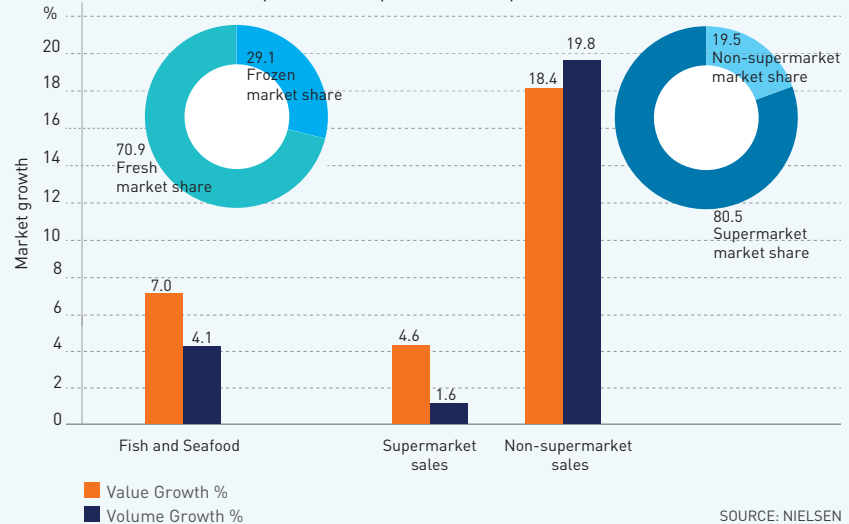
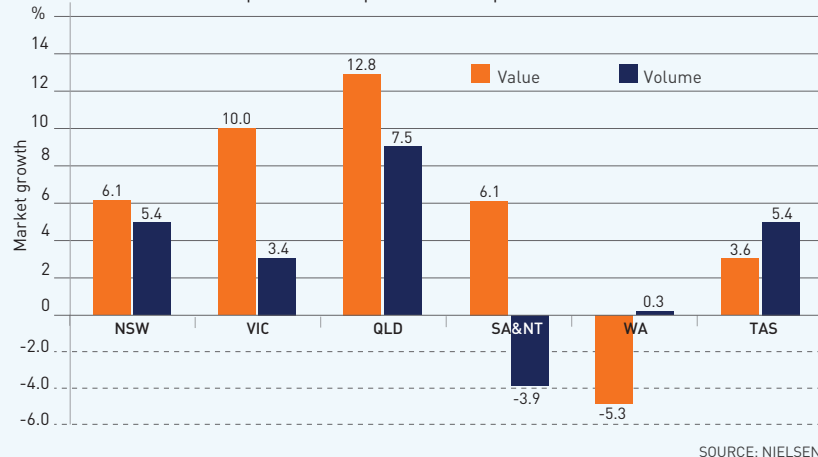


Figure 5 State-based growth in retail seafood sales by value and volume – 4 weeks to 18 April 2020 compared to same period in 2019





Time online to upskill

Coronavirus restrictions on travel and group activities have highlighted learning opportunities and the value of online platforms for participants in the seafood sector

By Catherine Norwood

Right
From left, the Australia Bay 2's mate Hari Wibowo and skipper Budijati Sutowo Nur test out the SeSAFE learning modules on a tablet at the wharf in Darwin.

Photo: Mike O'Brien

Online courses have been the go-to format for education and training around the world during COVID-19 restrictions.

But they also provide valuable long-term opportunities for Australia's seafood sector, as operators are often in far-flung corners of the country.

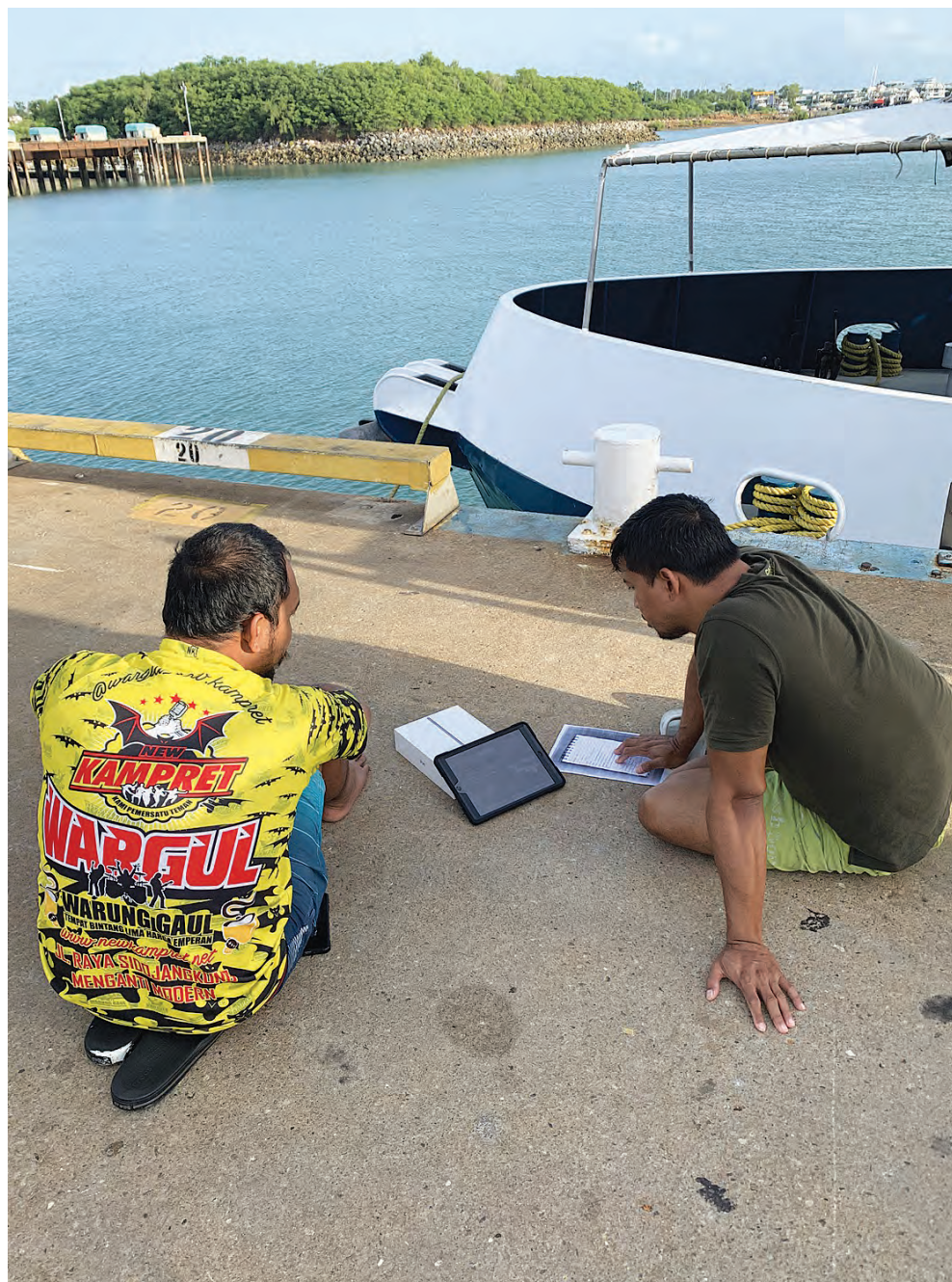
Safety training

For those at sea, the online national safety program SeSAFE, funded by the FRDC, is a means to acquire the latest maritime safety training or update their knowledge. SeSAFE project leader Steve Eayrs says the program has developed a suite of dedicated training modules for the fishing industry, which can be accessed any time that is convenient to fishers, irrespective of their location. "This training is ideal for fishers while restrictions on physical distancing are in place."

As restrictions ease, the program will continue to offer easy access to module-based training to anyone, in the safety of their home. An email address is all that is needed to start.

Most modules are around five minutes long and participants work through each one online. There is no need to travel and take part in group training.

"Crews at sea can also receive training onboard, either in a group or individually, or if quarantined, without risk of exposure to others onshore,"



Steve Eayrs says. "And if internet is an issue at sea, training is still available – providing modules are downloaded onto a tablet prior to going to sea." The entire crew can also receive training simultaneously by connecting the tablet to a monitor in the wheelhouse or galley.

One of the newest models added to the program, developed in response to the threat of COVID-19, focuses on personal health in the confines of a boat, and personal hygiene to minimise risks of bacterial and viral infection at sea.

SeSAFE now has 42 modules available, including risk assessment, personal safety,

operational safety and emergency response, and can provide a solid foundation for the induction processes that are mandatory on all commercial fishing vessels.

Where onshore group training is not available under COVID-19 restrictions, SeSAFE can act as a 'place holder' until it is safe to provide practical, hands-on training.

General Manager of Australia Bay Seafoods Michael O'Brien says the company's crews have made use of the SeSAFE training for the past two years. They started with a shore-based group training session once a



year. Australia Bay Seafoods has three boats operating year round, with up to 40 crew doing the training.

“Now we’ve put it onto the boats,” Michael O’Brien says. “We have a tablet on each of the boats, and the SeSAFE modules are downloaded so crew can do them offline. I’ve chosen the 25 modules relevant to our business that I want crew to do, but it’s up to the skippers whether they do the modules individually, or as a group.”

The decision to access modules offline and at sea has worked well in light of COVID-19 restrictions. The company has also moved from annual training to twice-yearly refresher training – in January and July. When the next round of training falls due, and with quarantine restrictions likely still in place for those at sea, they will be well placed to complete it.

Michael O’Brien says he uses the SeSAFE training in conjunction with another app, called Miracle Mobile, which creates electronic documents to record their training activities. The company is in the process of adding all of its Safety Management System documents and related documents for each vessel to the app to provide an electronic reference and record of all relevant activities. With all documents in the one place, the task of recording training activity for each skipper is streamlined and simplified.

Leadership for women

Women in Seafood Australasia (WISA) is running what president Karen Holder describes as a “101 in leadership” to help young women take the first steps towards a greater role in the sector.

The C-Leaders online course is being run by the National Rural Women’s Coalition, and the first program offered was filled quickly. A second course is planned for early 2021.

Karen Holder says providing the training online is essential as it makes it accessible to those whose other commitments or location prevent them attending more formal face-to-face leadership programs.

It is helping to meet what she says is a strong demand for training

to help women in the sector improve their skills, thus enabling them to contribute more to the future of the sector and their local communities.

The six-week course, which started in June, is designed to help participants learn about their own leadership style and build confidence. They will also have the support of online forums created to discuss the course and share ideas.

The course is free to WISA members and is funded by the FRDC.

Community engagement

Peak fishing bodies in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia are offering free online training for members of the fishing sector, with a focus on leadership and community engagement.

Seafood Industry Victoria is coordinating the course and executive director Johnathon Davey says it provides a firm grounding in the skills people might need to participate in a community organisation or to take on a leadership role. It is open to anyone in the seafood industry, including fishers, crew, seafood processors, retailers, those in aquaculture and their family members.

The course covers oral, written and interpersonal communication skills, meeting processes, technological knowledge, decision-making, identifying opportunities for involvement and community engagement. At the conclusion of the training each participant will have a personalised community engagement plan for his or her business.



Women in Seafood Participation Pathways Program
6 week C-Leaders Online Program

The WISA Women in Seafood C-Leaders Online Program has been specifically designed as a Leadership Pathway for women in the seafood industry wishing to improve their leadership and advocacy skills. Learning about your unique style and learn to work with others with differing technique. The program will also touch on some self-care, awareness and limitations as part of a leadership journey.

This 6 week program, 60 minutes each Tuesday night starting 23 June 2020 will cover core skills in topics like self-leadership, working effectively with others, planning, advocacy and influencing and confidence and resilience as well as elements of personal safety.

The program includes an exclusive interactive session with Australian Seafood Industry leaders on Tuesday 14th July 2020.

Program dates and times (AEST)

- 7:30 – 8:30pm Tuesday 23rd June 2020
- 7:30 – 8:30pm Tuesday 30th June 2020
- 7:30 – 8:30pm Tuesday 7th July 2020
- 7:30 – 9:30pm Tuesday 14th July 2020
- 7:30 – 8:30pm Tuesday 21st July 2020
- 7:30 – 8:30pm Tuesday 28th July 2020

This program is free to members of Women in Seafood Australasia (WISA). If you would like to become a member of WISA please complete the membership form on our website: www.womeninseafood.org.au

What will I learn?

- Self-leadership, and working effectively with others
- How to advocate and influence
- How to build confidence and resilience skills

What am I committing to?

- Attending all six sessions
- Actively participating in group discussions
- Completing the program’s pre-reading exercises
- Completing the weekly home exercises that will prepare you for the upcoming session
- Completing program surveys

What do I need?

- A computer – our university-grade software cannot be used on a mobile phone or tablet
- A reliable internet connection
- A headset with microphone
- A camera in your computer is helpful but not essential

Johnathon Davey says the online components of the course will take about six hours to complete and will be followed by a one-day, face-to-face training session. There will be several of these sessions in each state, and travel costs to attend the session closest to each participant will be covered.

The Australian Maritime and Fisheries Academy developed the course, which is supported by funding from the Australian Government and industry peak bodies. Further programs may be provided if the first course is successful. **F**

MORE INFORMATION

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www.wfsa.org.au

In these changing times, what **do you need** more information on?

Are there **issues you know about** that you want to communicate more widely?

The Fisheries Research and Development Corporation's (FRDC) role is to create knowledge, educate and inform. In this challenging time the FRDC wants to hear from you, to make sure we are providing the information our stakeholders in the seafood sector need.

Please get in touch and we'll do our best to answer your questions in our upcoming publications. You can email us at frdc@frdc.com.au or submit them via the frdc website:

www.frdc.com.au

