

Board Members:

I have fished shrimp using pot gear throughout southeast Alaska since 1989 and have processed using a direct market license for much of that time. I have sold fresh and frozen shrimp both whole and as tails. I have also fished most of the months of the year since when I started some areas were open year round and some re-opened for a summer season on May 1. My fishing operation is based out of Wrangell, a nice central area to fish from.

I am opposed to moving the current season date to a spring or early summer fishery. The main reason for my opposition is I have fished them during this time of year and the quality of the shrimp is much lower on May 1 or 15 than it is on October 1. This quality is noticed in a tail meat that is softer because the water content is higher since this is part of the molt process. This leads to a delamination of the shell once the shrimp is frozen and held for any length of time. This delamination is evident by the white spots that these shrimp develop which makes them cosmetically unappealing. In short I've had customers complain about appearance and texture with shrimp harvested in the spring that have been happy with the same product and process in the fall. My experience with coon stripe shrimp in May is that they are later to drop their eggs and molt. Many of the females are still carrying a small percentage of eggs and the egg swimmerette fins have filled back in with mud and sand and this is impossible to remove from the egg adhesive that is left behind. These shrimp were unmarketable.

A secondary reason for my opposition to moving the season date is that there are a high percentage of direct market boats in this fishery. Most of us have developed markets either through small brokers or direct to consumer. These markets exist at this time of year since other areas aren't open and the holidays are approaching, these shrimp are a high value seafood that is sought after at this time of year. If the season is moved we will either hold the shrimp frozen for sale in the fall with a lowering of the quality of the final product and holding costs or we will need to develop markets to purchase them at a different time of year.

Thank you for considering my late comments in opposition to changing the season opening date for the spot shrimp fishery.

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F/V Danegeld