



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release OCTOBER 15, 1959

STORY OF FISH INCLUDED IN AGRICULTURE YEARBOOK

Included in the recently issued Department of Agriculture Yearbook for 1959--FOOD--is the story of the Department of the Interior's activities relating to fish and the fishing industry.

The article is by A. W. Anderson, Assistant Director of the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, Fish and Wildlife Service. It deals with the food aspects of fish--the food which is hunted, not farmed--and the activities of the Department of the Interior in behalf of the fishing industry and in the interest of the consuming public.

The value of fish as a food is well set forth--a well-balanced protein with good percentages of several essential vitamins and with "unsaturated" acids of apparently considerable value in lowering the cholesterol level in the blood serum.

The standards of quality for several fishery products and the inspection service which assures quality fishery products are described as services available to those fishery processors who want to display the Department of Interior shield of quality on the goods they offer to the householder.

There is a "purchasing guide" which explains the terminology of fishery products in simple language and numerous items of interest to the housewife about fish and shellfish.

After the discussion of fish as a food comes information on the activities of the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries in behalf of the fishing industry and the consumer of fishery products. Concisely told is the story of fishery statistics compiled by the Bureau and the dissemination of market information which puts buyer and seller on an even footing on facts about supply and demand.

In 1957, the annual harvest of about 5 billion pounds was worth \$351 million to the men on the boats; \$592 million at the processing level; \$836 million at wholesale level and \$1,091 million to the retailers.

A chart shows that American production is relatively stable but that the imports are definitely increasing; another chart shows the United States in second position, far behind Japan, in fish production and just barely ahead of mainland China and the U.S.S.R.

The interesting story of fishery biological research is told. Included is a reference to the three-Nation effort which is being made to learn enough about salmon to set up salmon management plans for countries in two hemispheres. The job is complex, for salmon is a fish which has a definite "home" for short periods in America or Asia at hatching and spawning times but otherwise is voyaging several thousand miles of ocean.

There is the story of the sea lamprey, the huge king crab and the minute oyster crab, common and uncommon fish and shellfish, fishing equipment problems, distribution problems, the value of fish meal in animal diets and the value of fish oil in industry. There is material about exploratory fishing, gear research which helps the industry meet some of its technical and practical problems, and technological research which aims to make it possible for the consumer to get the best possible product.

In one place the article pays tribute to the American fishing industry with "Our fishing industry is unusually independent. It prefers to pursue its own course with a minimum of governmental assistance or the exercise of Federal or State authority. There is no Federal legislation authorizing subsidies or price support or similar programs for fishery foods. The producers and consumers do benefit, however, from the research and similar services that the government provides for most industries."

X X X