

News release

28 November 2012

Artisanal Hastings herring fishery wins top sustainability award

The Hastings Fisherman's Protection Society artisanal herring fishery, which has Marine Stewardship Council accreditation, has won the Billingsgate Seafood School Annual Sustainable Fish and Shellfish Award 2012.

Participants vying for the Billingsgate Award, which is sponsored by the Sea Fish Industry Authority included:

- John Hancock, Managing Director of Carisma UK, who applauded the sustainability credentials of frozen at sea MSC certified Norwegian cod
- Mark Greet, Managing Director of FalFish and Chairman of the Scallop Association who promoted 2012 as the year of the Great British King Scallop
- Lucy Haxton of The Fish Company who talked about the benefits of farmed British tilapia
- Andrew Brown from the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute who presented the dynamic wild Alaskan salmon fishery
- Kenny Woods from Anglesey Aquaculture who presented the case for UK farmed sea bass

More than 100 trade professionals – from chefs and buyers, to technical managers and fishmongers – listened to the lively presentations and had the opportunity to taste all the seafood over a brunch and lunch, before casting their vote on which product should win.

Yasmin Ornsby collected the award on behalf of the Hastings Fisherman's Protection Society. This small herring fishery will be MSC-certified for the third time in its history in 2012. The presentation covered the difficulties the fishery has had in adapting to modern demands with an aging fleet of under 10 metre boats which are all beach launched. She particularly highlighted community engagement citing work with local schools, a museum and fish market, and the re-launch of a Herring Festival.

Phil MacMullen, Head of Environment at Seafish, set the context for the day with an opening presentation. He said: "The day was all about celebrating sustainable seafood and we have a lot to celebrate. We have a healthy and productive seafood industry and a wonderful array of delicious seafood on offer and recognise that fish is a valuable protein source.

“At Seafish we are committed to the efficient and sustainable harvesting of those resources on which the UK seafood industry depends and the protection of marine ecosystems. Industry is changing and increasingly has to balance the needs of conservation with food security.

“Industry needs to work together to ensure a sustainable future and to build stakeholder consensus and supply chain confidence; set standards in management, provenance and quality; tackle discards and ethical trading issues; and work more with under-utilised species.”

Adam Whittle, Seafood Industry Consultant at Billingsgate School, said: "Every year this event keeps getting better. I am delighted that Hastings herring won the audience's hearts. I have a real passion for these oil rich fish which are so good for us, taste delicious and affordable (only £8 for 6kg on Billingsgate Market today). All finalists provide us with great case studies to promote over the coming year. These species will refresh our curriculum within our schools education programme, classes for the general public and Industry training courses."

Ends

For more information contact:

Dani Sewell, Seafish

T: 01472 252321

E: d_sewell@seafish.co.uk

Adam Whittle, Billingsgate Seafood Training School

T: 020 7517 3545

E: adamwhittle@seafoodtraining.org

Jennifer Butler / Jamie Corr / Stacey Blevins

Weber Shandwick

T: 0131 556 6649

E: jbutler@webershandwick.com / jcorr@webershandwick.com / sblevins@webershandwick.com

Notes to editor:

Seafish was founded in 1981 by an Act of Parliament and supports all sectors of the seafood industry for a sustainable, profitable future. It is the only pan-industry body offering services to all parts of the seafood industry, including catching and aquaculture, processors, importers, exporters and distributors of seafood and restaurants and retailers.

Seafish is funded by a levy on the first sale of seafood landed in the UK. Its services aim to support and improve the environmental sustainability, efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the industry, as well as promoting sustainably-sourced seafood. Its services include technical research and development, responsible sourcing initiatives, economic consulting, market research, industry accreditation, safety training for fishermen and legislative advice.

www.seafish.org