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FISHING FOR AN EASY APPROACH TO EATING SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD?

Aquarium of the Pacific launches new Seafood for the Future program

Look for the Aquarium's sustainable seafood logo at Southland restaurants, and receive a FREE ticket to the Aquarium for making a "green" choice

(Long Beach, Calif.—September 22, 2009) — Trying to find out how seafood was caught can be a daunting and sometimes impossible task for consumers trying to make a green choice. The Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach, Calif., is starting a new program to help take the guesswork out of selecting sustainable seafood. The Aquarium's Seafood for the Future program helps restaurant patrons easily identify dishes made from sustainable seafood through its new logo. Those purchasing a logo item will be rewarded for making an eco-friendly decision by receiving a free ticket to the Aquarium of the Pacific. "The idea behind Seafood for the Future is simple; we get the answers for you. All you need to do is look for the logo at participating Southland restaurants," said Andrew Gruel, Aquarium of the Pacific, Seafood for the Future manager.

In Greater L.A., seafood consumption per person is twice the national average. The current demand for seafood outpaces supply, and the gap is widening. Therefore, the Seafood for the Future program is beginning by building a community of concerned chefs, restaurateurs, caterers, fisherman, and seafood suppliers to offer the public with sustainable seafood choices in the region. To be considered sustainable by the Aquarium, the product must be healthy, from a sustainable wild or farmed fishery, eco-friendly, and socially-responsible. Where mercury or PCB levels present a risk, the Aquarium has created advisories to protect women and young children. "Our seafood program follows strict scientific criteria to ensure humans, fish populations, and the environment are all part of the equation," said Dave Anderson, Aquarium of the Pacific, and Seafood for the Future biologist.

Seafood for the Future includes sustainable aquaculture or fish farming as an option. Despite popular beliefs, not all fish farming operations are bad. Good aquaculture can produce high quality seafood without negative environmental impacts. Over 2/3 of the world's wild fish stocks are currently fished at or over sustainable levels, and it is predicted that the entire wild seafood industry could collapse in 50 years unless alternative solutions are sought. "The only way we can meet the growing seafood demand and protect wild fish stocks is by sustainable aquaculture," Jerry Schubel, Aquarium of the Pacific CEO.

The Aquarium's new program is made possible by Pacific Life Foundation and SAVOR.... The Seafood for the Future logo is currently featured at: Providence Restaurant (Hollywood); Lucques Restaurant (Los Angeles); Nook Bistro (Santa Monica); Walt's Wharf (Seal Beach); and Long Beach restaurants Nino's Italian Restaurant, Parker's Lighthouse, Renaissance Long Beach, and more; and catering companies such as Eco Caters and Primal Alchemy. Consumers can look for featured sustainable seafood dishes at the following Seafood for the Future partner restaurants: Spark Woodfire Grill (Huntington Beach, Studio City, and Beverly Hills); McKenna's on the Bay (Long Beach); The Queen Mary (Long Beach); Sea Rocket Bistro (San Diego); and more. There are also seafood distributors onboard, including Cleanfish and Long Beach Seafood, and the public can look for Seafood for the Future sustainable cooking demonstrations at local Whole Foods markets. The list of partners is growing; for the most updated list and more information on the program, visit aquariumofpacific.org.

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