

Developing Value-Added Aquaculture Products

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What Is *Value-Added*?

Adding *value* means employing processing methods, specialized ingredients or novel packaging to enhance the nutrition, sensory characteristics, shelf life and convenience of food products.



Consumers Are Time-Starved

- ◆ Four of American's top time-saving activities involve food: 68% eat out, 64% bring home take-out meals, 41% reheat frozen meals, and 35% cook the main course in a microwave
- ◆ Currently 80% of seafood dollars are spent in the foodservice sector: *Red Lobster dominates the \$4.8-billion seafood chain segment with 2001 sales of \$2.2 billion*
- ◆ Almost half (46%) of U.S. food dollars are spent away from home
- ◆ By 2010, 53% of U.S. food dollars will likely be spent outside the home

Consumers Are Demanding More Fish

- ◆ Per capita consumption of seafood in the U.S. increased from 14.6 pounds in 1997 to 16.3 pounds in 2003
- ◆ Fish is viewed as heart-healthy: *high protein and low fat*
- ◆ Pre-prepared seafood meals account for 25% of all in-store seafood sales
- ◆ Consumer demand is increasing for seasonal, locally-harvested seafood



Popular Fishery Products

- ◆ Tilapia is among the “Top Ten” foods appearing on restaurant menus
- ◆ Shrimp is the top-selling seafood in the U.S.
- ◆ Shrimp and clams are replacing high-fat breakfast meats in trendy restaurants
- ◆ Fried seafood represents nearly 50 percent of all restaurant appetizer sales



State Supported Technical Assistance for Fish Growers and Processors

- ◆ The NC State Seafood Laboratory is a technical resource center dedicated to enhancing the post-harvest handling, processing and distribution of fishery products
- ◆ The NC Fishery Resource Grant Program provides funding to help industry develop value-added products and determine the marketability of seafood
- ◆ The Seafood Laboratory and NC Sea Grant have assisted seven in-state businesses commercialize 30 new fishery products since mid 1990s: *Scallop Medallions*
- ◆ The idea for a bacon-wrapped, seafood appetizer line came out of NC Fishery Resource Grant 02-ST-05



Creating a Marketing Program for Value-Added Products

*Developmental Assistance
Supported by NC Fishery Resource
Grant 03-ST-03*

Developing a Brand Name

- ◆ Public relations firm Fleishman Hillard evaluated Southern Farm brand name
- ◆ Reviewed the VISION and STRATEGY of the products/business
 - How are our business strategies helping our competitive advantage?
- ◆ Explored the CURRENT IMAGE of the brand
 - What kind of image is now being conveyed to customers?
- ◆ Defined the DESIRED IMAGE
 - What words and ideas define our company? Who is our target customer? How do we want our customers to think about our brand and products?

Brand Evaluation Result

- ◆ Decided on two brand names from a list of 16
- ◆ Trademark review conducted by an attorney
- ◆ Final result:
 - *Coastal Treasure* brand for all seafood products.
 - *Southern Farm* brand for all beef and pork products.
- ◆ Simple wording promotes instant consumer awareness
- ◆ Developed a TAG LINE to support both brands:
 - “Certified Southern”
 - Identifies company’s heritage and supports the “Freshness from NC Waters” program

Packaging Development and In-Store Displays

- ◆ Brand logos for the Coastal Treasure and Southern Farm brands are similar



- ◆ Distinct colors for each brand allows for visual association and differentiation.
- ◆ Readable font. Simple design permits reproduction on stationary or clothing
- ◆ Outline of the state communicates company origin and supports the “Freshness from NC Waters” program.
- ◆ Product packaging and labels are being finalized.
- ◆ In-store displays will be produced when product line goes to retail

Sales Brochures

- ◆ Contracted with a professional photographer to take photos of the appetizer line
- ◆ Five thousand sales brochures were produced for \$1800
- ◆ Company stationary was printed with the Coastal Treasure and Southern Farm logos.
- ◆ Designed a survey sheet with both color and black and white graphics so logos would reproduce well on any printer
- ◆ Objective: deliver a consistent brand image on everything from business cards and letterhead to company clothing, product packaging and in-store displays.

Advertising Program

- ◆ First trade advertisement was placed in the Southern Foods catalog
- ◆ Working directly with Southern Foods to develop strong trade relationships
- ◆ Participate in product trade shows
- ◆ Create advertising programs for different markets
- ◆ Current emphasis is on food service

Promotions Development

- ◆ Trade promotions will be coordinated with key distributors
- ◆ Offer Off-Invoice trade promotions during key selling periods
- ◆ For the appetizer line, promote product April - May for the heavy wedding season as well in September - October - November for the holiday entertaining season
- ◆ Potential in-store retail activities include:
 - In-store sampling
 - Develop stand-alone promotional displays
 - In-store coupons such as “take-one” coupons or register coupons printed at check-out
 - Advertise and price promote in weekly store flyers