



Creative Salmon Company Ltd.

PO Box 265 ♦ 612 Campbell Street Tofino BC V0R 2Z0

November 1, 2005

To Our Valued Customers,

RE: CLAIMS ABOUT SEAFOOD PRODUCTS SOLD AS *ORGANIC*

As you may be aware, California has drafted legislation to address the issue of seafood sold as 'organic.' This law will come into effect by January 2006.¹

Creative Salmon wholeheartedly supports any initiative that encourages accurate representation in the marketing, sales, and promotion of seafood. In this regard claims should reflect industry practices and promote safe, nutritious and healthy products. They should not be written in a way that intends to confuse or mislead seafood consumers.

Creative Salmon does not promote our farmed Chinook (King) salmon with the claim that it has Certified Organic status. Those who advertise and/or sell our product as 'organic' are making inaccurate claims. Some of our printed marketing materials have contained the term 'organically grown.' The use of that term has been curtailed in order to avoid confusion in the minds of consumers.

We use the term **Naturally Raised** to describe our product in the marketplace. Our intention with 'Naturally Raised' is to illustrate that our salmon are grown according to very deliberate management procedures and husbandry practices. The fish you purchase from Creative Salmon's farms are raised in a low-stress environment, with strict adherence to their health and welfare, and most important, *without the use of antibiotics*.

Our practices and procedures are congruent with those indicated in published international organic standards by organizations such as IFOAM, Soil Association, KRAV, Debio, Bio Suisse, Naturland and others. In many instances Creative Salmon's management practices meet and sometimes exceed the standards referred to above. We adhere to the Pacific Organic Seafood Association Organic Standards, June 2005.²

Creative Salmon www.creativesalmon.com is a founding member of the Pacific Organic Seafood Association (POSA) www.pacificorganicseafood.com, formed in 2002. POSA is working diligently at achieving formal accreditation as an organic certification body under the auspices of the Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia at www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca.

If you have any questions or concerns about this issue please do not hesitate to contact me at (250) 725-2884 or via email at spencer.evans@creativesalmon.com.

Best Regards,
CREATIVE SALMON COMPANY LTD.

Spencer Evans

Spencer Evans
General Manager

cc Brad Hicks, President, POSA

¹ See article below from www.SeafoodIntelligence.com

² Draft. Presented to the Standards Review Committee of the COABC during June 2005.

California Bill banning "organic" claims on seafood; No state or federal certification standards

Written By: Bertrand Charron
Category: Legal
Date Posted: 10/14/2005 9:50 AM

Deceptive labeling on seafood will be put to a halt in California by January 2006 now that Governor Schwarzenegger has signed SB 730 by State Senator Jackie Speier. The latter said that US consumers were being 'misled' and confused. The Bill targets, among other seafood, Canadian and Scottish farmed salmon labeled as organic, Speier says. Within the past year, the USDA has formed two aquaculture task forces to begin to develop organic standards for aquaculture but has yet to propose or finalize formal certification standards. As a result of this federal delay, "organic" seafood and fish are not required to meet any standards, have not been evaluated for toxic contaminant levels, and continue to be sold to consumers at a premium price.

There are currently no federal or state organic certification standards in place for fish and seafood. This has not stopped producers and merchants, however, from slapping labels onto fish and seafood products proclaiming them to be "organic." "California consumers deserve to know the truth about what they are eating and I am delighted that the Governor agrees," said Speier (D-San Mateo/San Francisco). "Labeling seafood as 'organic' in the absence of any state or federal certification standards is misleading, confusing and soon will be illegal," Speier added.

Seafood and fish are being sold under the 'organic' label in California today, including several farmed varieties from Scotland and British Columbia where increasing numbers of so-called 'organic' seafood are raised. What many consumers fail to realize is that these products do not necessarily conform to the definition of organic that they have come to expect when purchasing meat and produce.

A March 2005 nationwide online survey of 1,200 U.S. adults conducted by Consumers Union found that nearly half of consumers buy organic food. Moreover, nearly two-thirds of those surveyed expect fish and seafood products sold as organic to be free of contaminants such as mercury and PCBs.

Within the past year, the United States Department of Agriculture formed two aquaculture task forces to begin to develop organic standards for aquaculture but has yet to propose or finalize formal certification standards. As a result of this federal delay, "organic" seafood and fish are not required to meet any standards, have not been evaluated for toxic contaminant levels, and continue to be sold to consumers at a premium price. "Until a national organic standard is set, any organic label on seafood is meaningless. I'm thankful that the Governor signed this bill so that California can remain a leader in producing organic foods, and the integrity of the organic label is protected.

Fact sheet on SB 730, released by California State Senator Jackie Speier's office:

- The USDA has yet to adopt organic certification standards for seafood and fish products, as it has for produce, meat and poultry.
- If enacted, California would become the first state in the nation to place a ban on the use of the "organic" label on all seafood and fish products sold in the state until a federal or state standard is set.
- The lack of standards has prompted some retailers, most notably Whole Foods, to discontinue the sale of so-called "organic seafood" until the USDA establishes organic certification standards.
- Most "organic seafood" products currently sold in California are imported from Canada, Europe, and Southeast Asia and include farmed varieties of salmon and shrimp which researchers have shown pose a significant health risk due to the high levels of contaminants and pesticides (i.e. PCB's, dioxins, mercury) that have been found in these products.
- Canned tuna, which is required to carry a Proposition 65 warning for mercury levels, could also be labeled as "organic" and consumers could be easily misled to believe it is safer.
- A recent nationwide online survey conducted by Consumers Union, the publisher of *Consumer Reports* magazine, found that nearly half of all consumers buy organic food and almost two-thirds of respondents said that they do not expect contaminants in seafood and fish that are labeled "organic."