

CBC News

N.L. seafood producers tout local products at renowned Boston Expo

Mark Lane says seafood from Newfoundland and Labrador among the world's best

By Katherine Hobbs, [CBC News](#)

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The Seafood Expo North America in Boston is the second largest seafood expo in the world.
(Twitter/Jeremy Dunn)

Newfoundland and Labrador's seafood was a hit at this year's Seafood Expo North America in Boston.

"People recognize Newfoundland and Labrador seafoods as being one of the most premium seafoods in the world," said Mark Lane, executive director at Newfoundland Aquaculture Industry Association (NAIA).

"People have really, you know, taken a bite of the industry and they really like what they're tasting."

It's the largest seafood show in North America, with more than 1,200 exhibits representing 40 countries.

The provincial delegation consisted of around 50 people, said Lane, which included companies like Whitecap International Seafood Exporters, Ocean Choice International, Northern Harvest Sea Farms and several others.

He said the show is a great opportunity for "networking and speaking with buyers and distributors" to help get more product from the province to a global market.

"About 30,000 people walk through the doors of the Boston Seafood show in three days ... mostly from the New England states but all around the world and they're very interested in what we have to offer," said Lane, naming salmon, organic blue mussels and steelhead trout as a few that sparked interest.



The oyster shucking competition at Boston Seafood Expo 2016. (Raspberry Point Oyster Co./Facebook)

"People are really interested in the traceability and the sustainability of the species that we have ... because we have a long track record both in the fisheries and certainly in aquaculture over the last 10 or 20 years."

Tempting the palate to grow business



About 50 delegates from Newfoundland were at the 2016 Seafood Expo North America in Boston.

Lane told CBC's *The Broadcast* that a chef was onsite preparing different recipes with the products for free taste testing.

'But the most important thing outside of the relationship building, is making sales.'- *Mark Lane*

Getting buyers and distributors to taste their wares, he said, is a good way to spark a conversation and sell the province to the world.

He said some people may not be familiar with the province and want to know more about farming methods, for mussels and salmon, but they also want information about certification, whether it's organic or Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) certified, for example.

Supply and demand



Mark Lane says almost half of the province's total exports goes to the U.S.

The total exports for Newfoundland and Labrador seafood reached a record \$1.2 billion in 2015, with almost half of that to the United States, said Lane.

He added, this year 23,000 metric tonnes of seafood in aquaculture will need to get to eastern Canada and the New England states, so this market is crucial.

Buyers want to know that a supply is consistent, said Lane, and there will always be enough to fill the demand they have.

He said everything from Newfoundland in the aquaculture industry is shipped fresh and logistics can sometimes hamper getting product out, especially with the harsh winter weather.



Ice and cold weather can make it impossible to access product. (CBC)

Ice and cool water temperatures have also led to issues with fin fish and shellfish in the past.

During the expo Lane said he had the opportunity to meet with one of the largest brokers in the New England states, who already carries Newfoundland products, who may soon get the products served up on plates in California and Las Vegas.

"People are very interested, very enthusiastic about the seafood and there's a lot of talk about cod ... the potential of cod in aquaculture practices from a ranching perspective to ensure a consistent supply, so there are very, very interesting conversations that we're having down there."

Source: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/newfoundland-seafood-expo-boston-1.3484706>

with files from The Broadcast