



EKONE MARCHING AHEAD ON ALL EIGHT LEGS

PHOTOS BY LUKE WHITTAKER

Ekone assistant manager Todd Parkins processed two giant Pacific octopus on Monday, March 26. Octopus is the latest addition the Pacific County's company's canned seafood line that also includes oysters, tuna and mussels.

Bay Center company adds octopus to canned seafood line, 10 full-time positions

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BAY CENTER — In 1982, Ekone Oyster Company started with two people and a small smokehouse. Since then, the company has grown to more than 60 employees producing several varieties of smoked oysters, mussels and tuna from their Bay Center facility.

In February 2017, Taylor Shellfish purchased the company from founders Nick and Joanne Jambor.

Over the past year, the company has continued to expand and evolve adding 10 full-time positions and introducing octopus to their canned seafood lineup.

The 'best bay'

The farm grows Pacific Oysters primarily using an off-bottom culture on 350 acres of pristine Willapa Bay tide flats. The off-bottom, or "long lining process," is more labor intensive than traditional on-bottom methods as each oyster has to be individually strung and eventually removed from the line. The extra toil however, is worth the work, Ekone believes.

"The oysters will grow faster and eat better," said Ekone assistant manager Todd Parkins during a tour Monday, March 26. "It also helps with our product — they look nicer. It's done really well for us over the years."

Fundamentally, the lines keep the oysters from sinking



Octopus has joined oysters, tuna and mussels in Ekone Oyster Company's canned seafood lineup.