

CRAWLING WITH CRAB

TEMPORARY GLUT SLOWS PROCESSORS



Photos by Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Darren Carlson, an employee at Fishhawk Fisheries for 20 years, sorts Dungeness crab on Monday in Astoria. A glut of Dungeness crab has regional processors playing catch-up.

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

A perfect storm of weather, strong catches and domoic acid worries has led to a glut of crab on the market, overwhelming processors and making it harder for fishermen to find buyers for the high-value crustacean.

Dave Hubbard, captain of the fishing vessel Katrina, said he waited 58 hours to unload 25,000 pounds of crab his crew had caught between Garibaldi and Klipsan Beach, Washington. On Monday, the Katrina docked at the Port of Astoria's Pier 2, its catch unloaded by workers from Bornstein Seafoods.

Hubbard said processors were hit by icy weather on land preventing delivery trucks and workers from coming and going. The processors have boats on catch limits, he said, based on the amount of crab pots they drop.

"Everyone's jammed up," said Steve Fick, owner of Fishhawk Fisheries in Astoria.

On Monday morning, Fick said, he bought several thousand pounds of crab off a fishing boat that usually goes to Bornstein Seafoods, part of the way processors in friendly competition try to help each other and fishermen. With the amount of crab on the market, he said, processors might not do too well, either.

Too good at fishing

"The main problem is we have too many crab pots in the ocean," Hubbard said. "It's nothing but a fishing derby anymore."

He estimates that three-quarters of the Dungeness crab fishery for the year has already been caught. In the 1990s, Oregon and Washington state introduced a permit system for Dungeness crab fishing to limit the number of boats taking part. Later came pot limits for each permit holder to further limit the catch.

But Hubbard said the majority of commercial crab fishermen support even further lowering the number of pots in the water, with fishermen often catching the majority of the year's fishery in the opening weeks.

See CRAB, Page 4A

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Dave Hubbard
captain of the fishing vessel Katrina



ABOVE: Dungeness crab are sorted by employees on Monday at Fishhawk Fisheries in Astoria. BELOW: Bornstein Seafoods employees unload a fresh catch of Dungeness crab from the Katrina crabbing boat on Monday docked at Pier 2 in Astoria.



Greater oversight of ODOT sought

Tension between commission, department staff

By PARIS ACHEN
and NICK BUDNICK
Capital Bureau

The head of the Oregon Transportation Commission has asked Gov. Kate Brown to personally engage in beefed-up oversight of the Department of Transportation.

In a strongly worded letter on formal letterhead sent Jan. 10, Tammy Baney, the commission's chairwoman, requested quarterly meetings with Brown as well as an independent staff person to carry out commissioners' requests for information and research. Baney also wants an "active" role in ODOT Director Matt Garrett's performance review, now under jurisdiction of the governor.

"This is essential to ensure that the director is fulfilling our expectations as well as yours," Baney wrote, adding, "To effectively carry out the commission's statutory responsibilities and your policy direction, it is imperative that we more closely coordinate our efforts directly with you."

Baney, in an interview, said she intended no criticism of Garrett or ODOT staff. The all-volunteer, five-member commission she heads is appointed by the governor. On paper,

See ODOT, Page 4A

South Wind could offer shelter in disaster

Cannon Beach plans to transform 55-acre site

By LYRA FONTAINE
The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — With tsunami safety in mind, Cannon Beach hopes to transform 55 acres of forest into a place for shelter and long-term services in a disaster.

The South Wind site, located east of U.S. Highway 101 almost entirely outside the tsunami inundation zone, was purchased by the city in 2013. The goal was to relocate an emergency shelter, police station, fire station, school, child care and a food bank.

In 2014, the rough estimate of infrastructure development costs — highway, street and storm drainage improvements, among others — was about \$3.4 million.

Preliminary engineering work would cost an additional \$400,000, staff members said at a work session last week. The City Council will decide in coming months whether to include this amount in the budget next fiscal year.

See SOUTH WIND, Page 4A

First GMO apple slices to go on sale in Midwest

Enzyme reduced to prevent browning

By DAN WHEAT
EO Media Group

SUMMERLAND, B.C. — The first genetically modified apples to be sold in the U.S. will debut in select Midwestern stores next month.

A small amount of Arctic brand sliced and packaged Golden Delicious, produced by Okanagan Specialty Fruits of Summerland, B.C., will be in 10 stores this February and March, said Neal Carter, the company's founder and president. He would not identify the retailers, saying that's up to them.

"We're very optimistic with respect

to this product because people love it at trade shows," Carter said. "It's a great product and the eating quality is excellent."

Carter reduced the enzyme polyphenol oxidase to prevent browning when apples are sliced, bitten or bruised. The apples match the industry norm of not browning for three weeks after slicing but without using flavor-altering, chemical additives that the rest of the fresh-sliced apple industry uses.

Golden Delicious, Granny Smith and Fuji varieties have been approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Canada. An Arctic Gala could be approved in 2018. Only Golden and Granny Smiths have been planted long enough to produce fruit in commercial quantities by next fall.

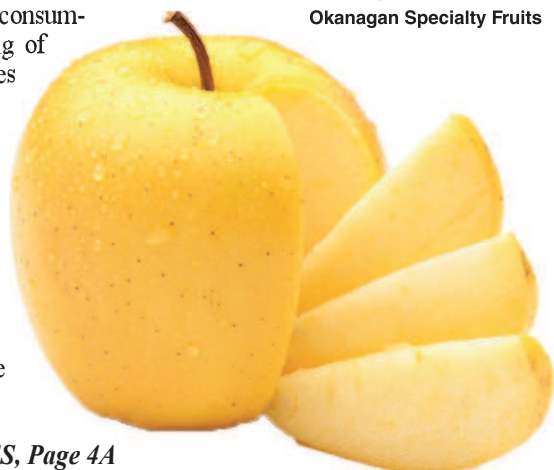
Midwestern retailers were chosen for the first sales this winter because they seemed like a good fit demographically and in presence and size, Carter said.

Asked if Midwest consumers may be more accepting of genetically modified apples than those on the East or West coasts, Carter said consumer research didn't indicate that and that it wasn't a consideration.

"We don't want to skew our testing marketing results by choosing stores that may be more friendly to genetic engineering," he said.

An Arctic brand Golden Delicious apple genetically modified to not brown when sliced. Packaged slices will be sold for the first time in the U.S. in February and March.

Okanagan Specialty Fruits



See GMO APPLES, Page 4A

