



PHOTOS BY VICTORIA SANCHEZ/SIUSLAW NEWS



Kyle and Amber Novelli catch and measure crab from their crabbing boat The Aquarius. The two run Novelli's Crab and Seafood off the docks of the Port of Siuslaw in Florence, Ore.

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Florence and the Port of Siuslaw aren't conducive to commercial fishing, but in a world of the commercialized food industry, Amber and Kyle want to help the community to take advantage of living on the coast with the option for fresh-caught seafood. "It's hard having a business model where I can't guarantee the species of fish, I can't tell when I'll have them or how many I'll have, or if there will be any at all," Amber says. "The only thing I can guarantee is that it will be fresh." The Novellis are currently building a dock next to Novelli's for additional seating, and Amber hopes to expand her fish case as well. They used to sell the fish Kyle caught to large vendors, such as Pacific Seafood, that freezes the fish to sell to restaurants, but now she is trying to keep her business completely in Florence — so the community can feel confident in their money supporting local fishermen. "It's hard to get rid of your fish if you're competing with prices in Newport. I'm trying

not to have to sell to Pacific. I want to be able to sell directly to the people of Florence," says Amber. "The whole reason we are lowering prices is so we can be 100 percent Florence." This is why Amber is going to start selling the fish they catch at wholesale prices. Since moving to Florence, Amber says she's found a supportive community like no other, and she wants to continue helping other local fishermen in Oregon by buying their fish when she and Kyle don't catch any. They plan to keep Novelli's open during the fall when crabbing season is closed by selling their own fish at wholesale prices, along with fish from trusted fishermen she knows along the Oregon coast. Back on The Aquarius, Amber and Kyle have finally reached their buoys, which are painted hot pink and white. Kyle uses a long handle with a hook to catch and pull in the buoys and grab the attached rope. He runs the rope through a silver contraption called a block that is attached to a giant arm that swings out

from the side of The Aquarius. The block strings the rope through and pulls the crab cage up from the depths below. Kyle grabs the cage, opens it and starts sorting the crab, throwing female and smaller crab back into the ocean. He resets the bait then throws the cage back into the water, ready for the next one. Each pot takes him less than two minutes to tend. "It's all about timing," Amber says, driving the boat while Kyle retrieves the crab pots. Since it's towards the end of the season, there are less crab than normal. "It's frustrating getting out here and there's no crab. Fishermen need a lot of patience," Amber says. But it's something they can do as a family. "I love crabbing because it's fast-paced and we all work together," Kyle adds. "We work shoulder to shoulder out here. It's a family thing," Amber says. "I'm hooked and I can't leave." Visit Novelli's Crab and Seafood Facebook page for updates on fresh fish and crab in stock.

the spotlight

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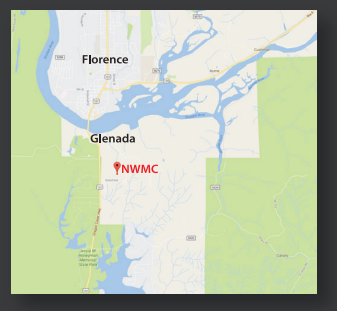
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