

U.S. exports to lobster-loving China go off cliff amid tariffs

By Patrick Whittle
The Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine — U.S. lobster exports to China have fallen off a cliff this year as new retaliatory tariffs shift the seafood business farther north.

China, a huge and growing customer for lobster, placed heavy tariffs on U.S. lobsters — and many other food products — in July 2018 amid rising trade hostilities between the Chinese and the Trump administration.

Meanwhile, business is booming in Canada, where cargo planes are coming to Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Moncton, New Brunswick, to handle a growing bump in exports. Canadian fishermen catch the same species of lobster as American lobstermen, who are based mostly in Maine.

The loss of business has brought layoffs to some Maine businesses, such as The Lobster Co., of Arundel, where owner Stephanie Nadeau has laid off half the 14 people she once had working in wholesale.

“They picked winners, and they picked losers, and they picked me a loser,” Nadeau said. “There is no market that’s going to replace China.”

America has exported less than 2.2 million pounds of lobster to China this year through June, according to data from the U.S. federal government. The country



exported nearly 12 million pounds during that same period last year. That’s a more than 80% drop.

In Canada, exports to China through June were already approaching 33 million pounds, which is nearly as much as all of 2018.

The value of Canada’s exports was nearing \$200 million in U.S. dollars through June and was almost sure to outstrip last year’s total of more than \$223 million. America’s exports through June were valued at less than \$19 million, more

than \$70 million behind where they were through June 2018.

Lobster prices paid by American consumers have remained fairly steady during the trade dispute, and there remain many buyers for U.S. lobster. But the loss of China as an overseas market is happening at the end of a decade in which the U.S. seafood industry experienced exponential growth in lobster exports to the country. The U.S. exported about 800,000 pounds of lobster in China in 2010 and more than 20 times that last year.

CANADIAN CRUSTACEANS. A 3.5-pound lobster is held by a dealer at Cape Porpoise in Kennebunkport, Maine. America’s lobster exports to China have plummeted this year as new retaliatory tariffs have shifted business to Canada. (AP Photo/Robert F. Bukaty)

The American lobster industry is looking to open up new domestic and international markets to make up for the loss of China, said Marianne LaCroix, who directs the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative. Maine lobsterman Brian Rapp will attend a trade show in Hong Kong and a trade mission to Dubai in September to promote U.S. lobster, she said.

“China is so large that you have to look at a number of new markets to replace that business,” LaCroix said.

In Canada, the boost to business has helped the industry but also led to uncertainty about its future, said Geoff Irvine, executive director of the Lobster Council of Canada.

The American and Canadian lobster industries overlap, with some businesses operating on both sides of the border, and it’s more beneficial to the lobster industry at large for trade to go on unimpeded, he said.

“Whenever there’s any kind of uncertainty, it makes people worry,” Irvine said. “Everybody would like to see the entire lobster industry open and free.”

Meth in the morning, heroin at night: Inside the seesaw struggle

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users said meth was also a problem. Three years later, 22% said so.

“That is very high,” said Dr. Dan Ciccarone, a physician and professor at the University of California, San Francisco who has been studying heroin for almost 20 years. “That’s alarming and new and intriguing and needs to be explored.”

The speedball — heroin and cocaine — is a classic combination, he said.

“It’s like peanut butter cups, right? Chocolate and peanut butter together,” he said. “Methamphetamine and heroin are an unusual combination.”

The meth-and-heroin combo is referred to as a goofball, Ciccarone added, because it makes the user feel “a little bit silly and a little bit blissful.”

For Kim, adding heroin to her methamphetamine habit compounded her use. “I ended up doing both, at the same time, every day, both of them,” she said.

It was all about finding the recipe to what felt normal. Start with meth. Add some heroin. Touch up the speed.

“You’re like a chemist with your own body,” she said. “You’re balancing, trying to figure out your own prescription to how to make you feel good.”

Now Kim is trying to find balance without drugs. She’s been sober for a year. So has Amelia, the horse trainer. Her sobriety anniversary is her daughter’s birthday.

This story is part of a partnership that includes KQED, National Public Radio, and Kaiser Health News.

Trump’s fake accent angers Asian Americans as they veer left

By Terry Tang
The Associated Press

When Amanda Berg heard reports that President Donald Trump mocked the accents of the leaders of South Korea and Japan at a recent fundraiser, it brought back painful memories from her childhood.

Berg, a Korean American who grew up in Fort Collins, Colorado, recalled kids doing the “stereotypical pulling at the eyes and the mocking accent.” It made her feel like she was a foreigner in her own community.

Berg, a registered Democrat, is among a growing and crucial bloc of Asian-American voters leaning further to the left in the age of Trump, and his stunt, reported by the *New York Post*, angered her and many others.

“It empowers people who would be predisposed to doing that kind of thing anyway,” said Berg, a high school English teacher in Denver. “And it makes it acceptable to be openly, increasingly discriminating.”

Trump has used racist rhetoric to fire up his conservative base ahead of the 2020 election — most notably against four Democratic congresswomen of color. Telling them to “go back” to their home countries triggered widespread outcry, but his reported mocking of Asian accents garnered a more tepid reaction.

Some worry the frequency of Trump’s racially offensive remarks makes them easier to shrug off, a concern that could weigh on an Asian-American voting group that’s only growing in power.

The Asian-American voting-age population has more than doubled in the past two decades, leaping from 4.3 million in 1998 to 11.1 million in 2018, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. A majority of those new voters lean Democratic.

By 2016, some Asian ethnic groups that had leaned Republican shifted into the Democratic camp, said Natalie Masuoka, an associate professor of political science and Asian-American studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. A larger share of Asian-American Republicans voted for John McCain in 2008 than for Trump in 2016.

A Pew Research Center survey said 53% of Asian-American registered voters in 1998 identified with the Democratic Party. That figure rose to 65% in 2017.

“They are adding more and more new voters to the electorate,” Masuoka said. “Alongside Latino immigrants, they’re important for candidates to mobilize.”

Asian-American voters also could become a key factor in swing states. In Nevada, Asians make up 5% of registered voters and 9% of the eligible voting population. They comprise 5% of registered voters in Virginia and are 6% of the eligible voting population.

The GOP, meanwhile, remains appealing to Asian Americans who are strongly anti-communist, as many are in Vietnamese communities. Some data also suggests that a large proportion of Filipinos and wealthy, higher-educated Chinese Americans are more likely to go Republican, Masuoka said. There is no solid answer for why, but religion is one often cited reason, she added.

But it may be hard for some to look past Trump’s reported



ASIAN-AMERICAN ALIENATION. South Korean President Moon Jae-in, left, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, right, and U.S. President Donald Trump, center, meet before the Northeast Asia Security dinner at the U.S. Consulate General Hamburg in Germany, in this July 6, 2017 file photo. Trump angered some Asian-American voters after the *New York Post* reported that he mocked the accents of Moon and Abe at a fundraiser in the Hamptons. (AP Photo/Evan Vucci, File)

words. “He’s willing to use Asian stereotypes, Asian accents in his public speeches,” Masuoka said. “In that way ... the way Americans are talking about race is now shifting possibly back to what historically was effective before the civil-rights revolution” — explicit and sometimes offensive talk about race.

The *New York Post* reported that Trump imitated South Korea President Moon Jae-in and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, both close U.S. allies, at a fundraiser in the Hamptons in August. Trump used a fake accent to boast about Moon relenting in negotiations over the costs of U.S. military aid to South Korea and when rehashing talks with Abe about trade tariffs, according to the newspaper.

Trump has imitated Asian people before. At an August 2015 campaign rally in Iowa, he talked about his ability to deal with Asian negotiators and used broken English, saying, “When these people walk into the room ... they say ‘We want deal!’”

In the past, such comments have led to outrage.

In 1995, then-New York senator Alfonse D’Amato used a faux Japanese accent when discussing O.J. Simpson trial Judge Lance Ito, who is Japanese American, in a radio interview. The Republican senator’s apology was criticized at the time by the Asian American Defense and Education Legal Fund.

“It was a time where even though we were very offended by the remarks, we thought it might make a difference to ask for an apology. But with President Trump, one doesn’t expect that,” said Margaret Fung, the group’s executive director. “That’s part of the way he speaks, the way he acts, which is offensive. Unfortunately, it doesn’t get the kind of attention that maybe it should.”

Officials for Trump’s re-election campaign defended his record with Asian Americans.

“The Asian-American community has never been stronger than under President Trump’s leadership,” campaign spokeswoman Kayleigh McEnany said in a statement. “Millions of Asian Americans have secured access to the strongest economy in modern history, with the Asian-American unemployment rate

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and prosperous
Year of the Pig!!**

February 5, 2019 to
January 24, 2020