

# Slade Gorton Monthly Market Report

## March 2018



# SLADE GORTON

*America's Original Seafood Family™*

# Global Market Conditions

March 2018



## Catfish

**Chinese Catfish:** Producers are returning to plants as Chinese New Year winds down. Expectation is for production to restart and refill inventories. Prices are fairly stable. Issues with the USDA catfish inspection program appear to be alleviated for this item.

**Domestic Catfish:** Larger sized fillets are more plentiful in the market versus 3-5 oz and 5-7 oz. There is a strong call for 3-5 oz fillets.



## Clams

**Domestic Meat:** Poor weather conditions continue to hamper Atlantic clam production. “Super surfer” raw strip meat remains extremely limited. There is some relief on inshore production, which has offered some relief on smaller sized breaded strips. Weather is starting to improve.

**NEW! Whole Hard Shell Clams:** Vietnamese Whole Cooked hard shell clams should be in on inventory in March.

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## Cod

**Atlantic Cod** – Prices for single and twice frozen Atlantic cod items are moving higher. The market is up from a combination of seasonal Lenten demand and a shortage of Pacific cod in the market.

**Icelandic Cod** –Frozen Icelandic cod is available at competitive prices year round.

**Pacific Cod** –Anticipated raw material shortages are starting to grip the market. Pacific cod prices are at or above Atlantic cod. Traditional Pacific cod users are shopping around for alternative species including Atlantic cod.



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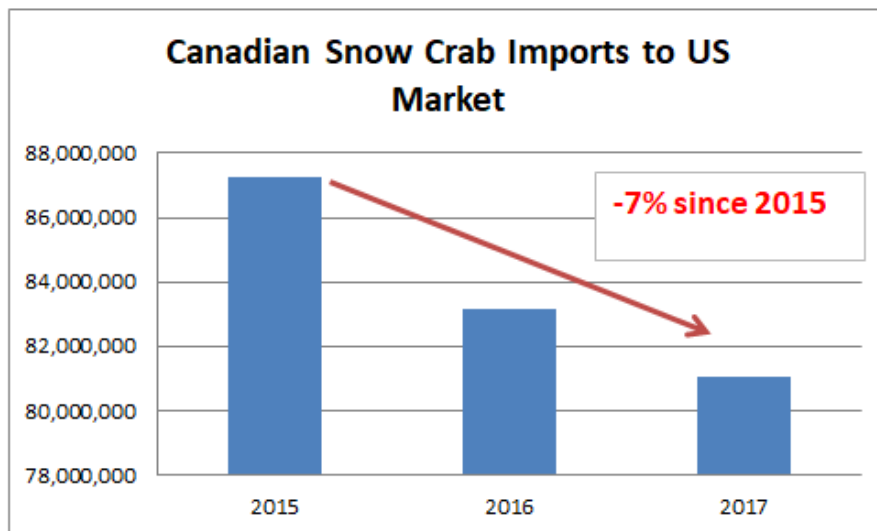


## Crab

**King Crab** – Prices continue to soften for a slow call. This market continues to rebound from record high prices that curtailed demand.

**Dungeness Crab** –New season production is in full swing. Supplies are readily available at good prices. Place orders now before fishing wraps up for the season.

**Snow Crab** – The market continues to hold at record high prices. Alaskan production did not offer spot market relief. Canada will post TACs in late March. Indications are that Canadian stocks are not in any worse shape compared to 2017. However, this also means TACs are likely to hold at record low levels for the 2018 season.



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## Haddock

**Haddock:** Lenten demand is in full effect. Prices are on the rise. Chinese producers are back from the New Year holiday. Expectation is for the market to remain strong into the spring.



## Lobster

**Coldwater Tails:** Expectations are for North American tail supplies to remain very tight into the spring the and summer. Prices for 4 oz tails are commanding premiums and flirting with all-time records. Inventories are closely held, and in many cases, offers are on allocation. Tail demand will increase between now and Mother's Day.

**Meat:** Meat prices could start to inch up as we head into April. Packers have stopped forcing meat sales with tails as inventories are coming into balance. US lobster meat imports were down about 20% in 2017. It's likely supplies will tighten into Mother's Day and before new season production from Prince Edward Island fishery reaches the market.

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## Mahi

Frozen Mahi is in good supply and prices are coming down. We do note high demand for the item as the market falls. There are plenty of offers on product as the market keeps coming down.

Fresh – Supplies are readily available. Fish is trending on the larger size. Catches are mostly originating from South American producers as the fish have migrated from Central American waters. The Mahi season will close at the end of March as fishermen gear up for swordfish and tuna season. Anecdotal reports suggest the 2017/18 mahi season was improved over the last few years.

## Mussels



**New Zealand:** New Zealand production is seasonally slowing down. Prices are up.

**Chilean:** Producers are reporting a decline in production from a bout of red tide in growing regions. Prices are up slightly.

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## Oysters

**Gulf Oysters** –Supplies for fresh and frozen oysters are adequate and prices are steady.



## Pangasius

**Pangasius:** Overseas suppliers continue to struggle with navigating the USDA's Catfish Inspection program. Container orders are experiencing massive delays across the industry. Total pangasius imports to the US market were down over 20% in 2017, a difference of 50 million lbs. Wholesale market prices are at record levels. There is no relief in sight for pangasius.



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ICYBAY Whole Grain Pollock Stick  
MSC Certified, PC# 25152



ICYBAY Pollock Fillet  
Available Frozen, Skinless, Boneless, IQF

## Pollock

Frozen pollock production will resume as Chinese packers restart operations from the Chinese New Year holiday break. The market is stable. Market participants are switching over to pollock as a replacement for pangasius. Alaskan pollock is available at competitive prices.



## Salmon

**Fresh Atlantic Salmon:** The Chilean fillet market continues to climb in the first quarter. The market strengthened from a combination of factors including Lenten season demand and tighter supplies. Air freight to the US market has been more limited because of a bountiful fruit season and Valentine's Day flower shipments. Additionally, algae blooms in Southern Chile forced producers to harvest fish early, while others reported mortalities. The outlook for the Chilean salmon market remains murky at this time. The industry appears to be waiting for algae blooms to subside in order to assess the full impact to production and supplies.

European salmon prices, specifically for Norwegian product, spiked in the last week of February. Reports blame higher than anticipated sea lice mortalities for the lower output and higher prices.



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## Salmon (cont.)

**Frozen Atlantic Salmon :**There are little changes to report in the frozen salmon market. Most orders for 2018 programs are booked. There is an uptick in frozen offers on the street, which is an indicator of market participants trying to unload inventories.



## Scallops

**Domestic** Atlantic scallop prices declining as boats are beginning to harvest in open areas. There is a general industry consensus that the 2018 season will produce a robust scallop harvest that will keep market prices low into the Q3.



## Shrimp

**Warmwater Shrimp:** Prices are starting to climb on all sizes. Inventories out of Indonesia are low. Indian production is also slow.

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## Squid



ICYBAY Loligo Calamari  
Frozen 5-8" T&T PC# 79635



ICYBAY Calamari Steaks  
Frozen 5-6 oz PC# 80659



ICYBAY Loligo Calamari "Portion Pack"  
Frozen 3-5" R&T PC#79800

**Loligo:** Prices are firming on 5-8's as inventories appear to be short in the market. Packers are trying to force 3-5 purchases, which suggests the size of the squid coming out of the water is small. Supplies are good for 5-8's and at competitive prices. Overall landing volumes are seasonally poor with Chinese vessels tied up for the New Year holiday. Expectations are for production to restart in May.

**Todarodes:** Prices are about the same as Loligo. Some market participants have noted even higher offers on product but nothing to warrant an increase in pricing. Production is essentially on hold due to the Chinese New Year.

**Peruvian Steaks:** Prices for Peruvian squid steaks are higher because of raw material shortages. Squid are now showing up seasonally late so expectations are for supplies to reach our inventories in late March. The market should adjust as inventories improve as we move into the spring.

**Chinese Steaks:** Expect to see Chinese squid steaks on inventory by the end of April. Production was mostly on hold because of the Chinese New Year. The market for Chinese steaks will be competitively priced.

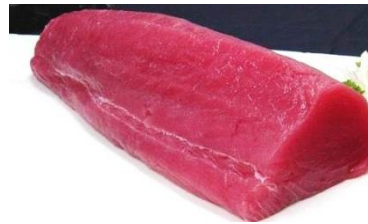
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## Tilapia

Tilapia supplies are readily available at good prices. Expect demand to rise steadily into the spring and summer as market participants seek alternatives to pangasius.



## Tuna

**Frozen Tuna** – Supplies are good on frozen tuna. The market is relatively stable.

**Fresh Tuna** – Fresh, graded-in-house tuna is readily available from an assortment of global suppliers at competitive prices.



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## Whiting

Whiting demand is hot with products from suppliers in Argentina tight. Domestic product is in good supply and reasonably priced.

