More than 500 Chefs Call for Seafood Traceability

Saint Louis, MO - June 20, 2013 - In a dramatic statement for the future of U.S. seafood, more than 500 of America's top chefs from 32 states have come together in a powerful call for the establishment of seafood traceability. This initiative is being announced in Washington, D.C. today at a press conference, where chefs will call for increased transparency in the seafood supply chain and support for the necessary changes to our nation's seafood laws.

The chefs, representing 26 states from coast to coast, have come together to call for increased transparency in the seafood supply chain, including efforts to track seafood from its source to our plates. More than 500 chefs and more than 1,000 restaurants have already signed on to this campaign, including such luminaries as Thomas Keller, California; Mario Batali, New York; Rick Bayless, Illinois; Michael Symon, Ohio; John Besh, Louisiana; Carla Hall, Washington, D.C.; and Jacques Pepin, Connecticut.

Jim Lafferty, President of the National Restaurant Association, has also come out in strong support of the chefs' initiative: "This is a significant step forward in promoting the health and safety of our nation's seafood. We are pleased to support this initiative and urge Congress to take action to make our seafood supply chain safer and more transparent."

The chefs are urging Congress to pass the Seafood Traceability Act (HR 1569, S 768), which would ensure that every seafood product entering the U.S. market is traceable from its point of harvest or capture to its point of consumption. This important legislation was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by U.S. Representative Brad Sherman (CA-30) and in the U.S. Senate by U.S. Senator Tom Udall (NM). The chefs are also calling for increased support for seafood farmers and processors who are committed to sea-sonal practices and sustainable seafood harvesting.

In addition to the chefs' initiative, a new online campaign is being launched to encourage consumers to demand sustainable seafood and to support chefs and restaurants who are committed to serving the best seafood available. Consumers are being asked to sign the pledge to eat sustainably traceable seafood and to pledge to support chefs who make sustainability a priority.

For more information, please visit www.oregoncoastchefs.org and www.oceana.org.

About Oceana

Oceana is the largest marine conservation organization dedicated to protecting the world's oceans and ocean life. Founded in 1988 as the Sea Shepherd Society, Oceana is an international organization with more than 150,000 members and supporters in the U.S. and 12 offices worldwide. Oceana campaigns for clean oceans, sustainable fishing, and protection of marine biodiversity.

All chefs' photos courtesy of Wikipedia.