

# MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL (MSC) AWARDS SUSTAINABILITY CERTIFICATION FOR OREGON'S CRAB FISHERY

*Oregon's Dungeness crab fishery, known for its well-managed, sustainable practices joins an elite group of fisheries around the world to achieve MSC certification*

Coos Bay, OR – (December 3, 2010) — Just in time for the fishing boats to hit the coastal waters off Oregon for the start of Dungeness crab season, the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission announced it has received the highest sustainability honor for the state's crab fishery. Joining an elite group of fisheries around the world, Oregon Dungeness crab products can now go into the marketplace with the Marine Stewardship Council's (MSC) distinctive blue and white logo. This global recognition gives consumers the confidence that the Oregon crab industry is committed to harvesting crabs in the most environmentally friendly manner.

"Oregon Dungeness Crab has always been synonymous with quality and flavor and now consumers have one more reason to love our local crabs," said Nick Furman, executive director of the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission. "Our crab stocks are robust and our harvested methods contribute to sustainability and take into consideration the overall health and well-being of our coastal waters."

The announcement comes after a robust, independent third-party assessment where the fishery was assessed against MSC's environmental standard and methodology, rooted in science, including assessment of the stock, effect of the fishery on the ecosystem, and the fishery management system. The certification assures that the fishery is well-managed with healthy stocks and uses a harvest method that is environmentally sustainable. The Oregon Dungeness crab fishery is one of only three crab fisheries in the world to receive MSC certification, and the only one of the five Dungeness fisheries (CA, OR, WA, B.C., AK) along the West Coast to be certified.

Oregon chefs love cooking with Dungeness crab throughout the year, especially during the December to August harvest season. James Beard award-winning chef Vitaly Paley, owner and executive chef of Paley's Place in Portland finds the versatility and quality of Oregon Dungeness crab hard to beat. "I always research where and how my ingredients are sourced and Oregon Dungeness crab fisheries have always maintained a high level of sustainable practices," said Paley. "This certification shows that Oregon is taking another step towards sustainable living and eating." At Paley's Place, Oregon Dungeness is used in dishes like Oregon Dungeness crab and truffle salad and Oregon Dungeness crab and corn risotto.

## **Official Oregon 'State Crustacean'**

Dungeness crab have been harvested commercially along the Pacific coast since the late 1800's and it recently became Oregon's official 'state crustacean'. They range from central California to the Gulf of Alaska, and have long been part of the Northwest's seafood heritage. Dungeness crab is Oregon's most valuable 'single species' fishery. Oregon fishermen harvested 23,195,059 pounds of crab during the 2009-2010 season with a landed value of \$44.8 million. The 2010-2011 season opened December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Dungeness crabs are harvested using steel pots at depths ranging between nine and 146 meters. Oregon is currently the top producer of Dungeness crab worldwide, and product is sold live, or as fresh or frozen whole cooked crabs, as well as picked meat, legs and sections. Dungeness crab is shipped to markets around the world—with the United States being the major market.

Fishing occurs between December and mid-August, with the majority of production occurring during the first eight weeks of the commercial fishing season. A state managed fishery, Oregon's Dungeness crab is regulated by size, sex and season, with only males meeting a minimum size standard harvested. Under-sized males and all females are returned to the water unharmed.

**About the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission (ODCC):**

The ODCC is an industry-funded commodity commission under the umbrella of the Oregon Department of Agriculture, representing 429 limited-entry Oregon crab permit holders harvesting a renewable resource in a sustainable fishery. Its mission is to enhance the image of Oregon's Dungeness crab industry and increase opportunities for profitability through promotion, education and research. The Dungeness crab fishery is the most valuable single-species fishery in Oregon and Dungeness crab was recently named the official 'State Crustacean' by the Oregon Legislature. For more information, visit [www.oregondungeness.org](http://www.oregondungeness.org).