

“The Twin Cities’ First Community Supported Fishery Arrives, Home Delivered, this Summer”

Beginning in July, Twin Cities residents will get a taste of their first Community Supported Fishery (CSF).

Sitka Salmon Shares will focus on connecting independent small boat family fishermen in Sitka, Alaska, with consumers in the Twin Cities through a CSF that allots members a share of Southeast Alaska’s wild sockeye, king, and coho salmon harvests in July, August, and September, respectively. Members can purchase shares of 15, 24, and 36 pounds, which are delivered in monthly installments of 5, 8, and 12 pounds. All salmon comes vacuum-sealed and blast frozen in 1-pound fillets and fillet portions and are delivered direct to the homes of shareholders.

The Community Supported Fishery grew in part from a fundraiser held by Minneapolis native Helen Schnoes last fall, while working with the Sitka Conservation Society (SCS) in Sitka, Alaska, on issues related to wild salmon. Schnoes reached out to neighbors and family friends back in the Twin Cities, offering to home deliver 10-pound shares of coho salmon, proceeds benefiting SCS.

“The response we received was amazing—we surpassed our initial goals and were able to conduct a second round,” says Schnoes. “I loved hearing stories of past trips to Alaska or a favorite salmon recipe. People seemed excited by this new way to experience wild salmon—one that told the story of the salmon’s origin while fostering greater human connections.”

The idea to professionalize the operation came from Nicolaas Mink, a professor of sustainable food systems at Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois, where Schnoes graduated in June of 2011. Mink had hired Schnoes to work with him in Alaska over the summer.

“To me, a CSF, even in the Midwest, seemed like a no-brainer. Fisheries constitute an important part of our food system, and yet the current models on which they rely are totally broken,” says Mink. “They’re too opaque for consumers, they put too much money into the hands of big multinational processors and fish brokers, and they leave small boat family fishermen who actually catch the fish high and dry.”

Sitka Salmon Shares offers a variety of novel arrangements that provides solutions to these current problems. All Sitka Salmon Shares salmon comes direct from independent, family fishermen who use low-impact fishing methods and who catch and process each salmon one at a time. In return, these fishermen receive anywhere between 10 and 100% more for their catch than they would from a larger fish processor. Sitka Salmon Shares also returns 1% of

all revenue to salmon habitat restoration and enhancement and purchases carbon offsets for all air shipping, which support wind farms in Iowa.

“Beyond our social and environmental values, the type of quality we deliver is unmatched. Salmon like ours is normally reserved for elite restaurants and Asian marketplaces,” notes Mink. “In fact, the exact same salmon our members will be eating for about \$5 a portion in July will be on the menu of Alice Waters’ Chez Panisse in Berkeley for about six times that much.”

To help introduce itself to eaters of the Twin Cities, Sitka Salmon Shares will sponsor the Uptown Market in Minneapolis on its opening day this summer, Sunday, June 10th.

Shares of the Community Supported Fishery will be sold until July 15th.

For more information about Sitka Salmon Shares:

Visit: www.sitkasalmonshares.com