



Fisheries Council of Canada
Conseil Canadien des Pêches

SUPPORTING THE ESSENTIAL SERVICES EMPLOYEES who are Supporting the World

With the COVID-19 pandemic, the entire world has entered an unprecedented situation. It is difficult to recall a time in living memory where so much of the world has been at a standstill, and yet some industries – and some people – find themselves busier than ever, shouldering the weight of our emergency response as they keep essential services functioning.

The Canadian fish and seafood sector is one of these essential services. Harvesters and processors and others along the supply chain have been declared essential by the federal government in their exhaustive list of the services that must continue operations to support citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic. Members of the fish and seafood industry remain hard at work to provide safe, sustainable products to fill grocery store shelves not only here in Canada but around the globe.

But that doesn't mean it's business as usual for our members. As our employees work to support the global public through a strong food supply chain, our members have been working to support them. Protecting employees, their families and our communities from the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace – from food processing facilities to fishing vessels – continues to be the top priority for fish and seafood employers.

In this ever-evolving crisis, following the latest guidance from governments and public health agencies has meant constant engagement with the authorities charged with oversight of public and food-supply chain health. As the national representative for the wild-capture fish and seafood industry, the Fisheries Council of Canada has been focused on connecting our members with information from bodies such as Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Public Health Agency of Canada, Public Safety Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Transport Canada and other industry stakeholders, who are all responsible for providing guidance for an aspect of the fish and seafood process.

Collectively, we've been able to implement effective solutions for physical distancing, additional health screening, and have taken an industry-wide inventory of personal protective equipment such as masks and sanitizers to triage needs and resupply options.

**By: Paul Lansbergen | President
Fisheries Council of Canada**



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Adapting to this new normal has had its challenges. The fish and seafood sector, along with the rest of the world, is constantly having to adapt to new guidance as we learn more about the virus and our response options. We are committed to continuing to engage with authorities and ask sector-specific questions when needed to ensure our solutions are tailored to the unique needs of our employees.

Our main focus is to keep our employees and communities supported and safe while providing essential, high quality fish and seafood products for Canadians. While there is no evidence that COVID-19 has been transferred through food or food products, our members continue to uphold world-class standards of food safety, sanitization and cross-contamination control to ensure the safety of all fish and seafood products.

On behalf of all of our members, the Fisheries Council of Canada wants to thank all essential services workers for their indispensable efforts as we work as a global community to overcome this crisis. All Canadians must come together to share our support for those who are dedicating themselves to keeping the world turning right now. Through this cycle of support, we can flatten the curve and save lives.

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