

Agriculture experts hadn't yet figured out how to breed shrimp in captivity. Shrimp farmers also weren't sure how best to combat shrimp viruses or how to adjust water salinity to maximize growth, reported *The Washington Post*.

Buyers liked the farmed shrimp because it was cheaper than wild and available year-round. The U.S. warm-water shrimp season runs from mid-July to early February.

Shrimp even has surpassed canned tuna as the seafood champ.

"America is one of the largest shrimp-consuming nations in the world," Watters says, which explains why the world is shipping shrimp to this country.

Shrimp consumption has nearly tripled in 20 years from just 2 pounds per person to 6 pounds, according to the Southern Shrimp Alliance.

Among the goals of the alliance, one has

been to push for tariffs on imported farm-raised shrimp to make American shrimp more economically competitive.

The organization has been trying to brand American shrimp through its Web site and in media campaigns.

The marketing campaign comes at an opportune time because Hurricane Katrina devastated so many shrimp boats and shrimping facilities along the Gulf Coast.

Fish Fraud

No matter what you call it, 'squat' isn't lobster

The Maine Lobster Promotion Council and Maine Sen. Olympia Snowe have called on the FDA to stop allowing restaurants to market langostino as lobster.

Langostino, Spanish for "prawn," refers to a number of shellfish species that are also called "squat lobsters."

The issue stems from a June 2005 lawsuit filed in Los Angeles Superior Court that unsuccessfully sought to prevent a California chain, Rubio's Restaurants Inc., from promoting a langostino-containing burrito as a lobster burrito.

Instead, the FDA supported the use of the phrase "langostino lobster" as part of its acceptable terms for marketing three species: *Cervimunida johni*, *Munida gregaria*, and *Pleuroncodes monodon*.

The decision allows Red Lobster and Long John Silver's, among other restaurants, to use (and heavily promote) the term "lobster" for langostino dishes.

"Use of this term is misleading to consumers and unfairly affiliates langostino with actual lobster to the detriment of the lobster industry in Maine," Snowe wrote to acting FDA Commissioner Dr. Andrew von Eschenbach, requesting a reversal of the decision to allow the term "langostino lobster" to be used on restaurant menus.

"The state of Maine and its lobstermen have worked hard to develop the Maine lobster brand and create a stable market for this sustainable fishery. With this decision, the federal government is undermining those efforts. Langostino is not lobster, nor should it be marketed as such. The FDA will be remiss in its duties if it continues to allow restaurants or other entities to perpetuate this hoax at the expense of Maine's lobstermen and America's seafood consumers," wrote Snowe, who chaired

the Senate Subcommittee on Fisheries.

The FDA has not yet replied, in part because of staffing cuts and the need to address the spinach *e. coli* outbreak.

While the media have had pun-filled fun at Senator Snowe's expense, people in Maine take the lobster/langostino issue

more seriously, as the definition matters to Maine's \$290 million lobster industry, which claims \$44 million in lost market value due to the masquerading langostino, according to the Maine Lobster Promotion Council.

— Catherine Schmidt

American lobster

American lobster, *Homarus americanus*, a member of the clawed lobster family (Nephropidae) found in the northwestern Atlantic Ocean from Newfoundland to North Carolina, with the largest concentrations occurring in the Gulf of Maine. Lobsters live on rocky bottom habitat. It is a trap fishery in Maine.

Length: 3-5 inches (carapace length).

Weight: 16 ounces and up.



Langostino lobster

The term "langostino," Spanish for prawn, is used to refer to a number of decapod crustaceans around the world, including shrimp and Norway lobster in Europe, hermit or porcelain crabs, and squat lobsters.

According to the U.S. FDA, "langostino lobster" can refer to any of three edible crustaceans in the squat lobster family (Galatheidae) that resemble but are not quite lobsters, crabs, or shrimp, all caught with drags or trawls in bottom waters of the Pacific Ocean.

Length: 3 inches or less.

Weight: 7 ounces or less.

Cervimunida johni (yellow squat lobster) look like crabs with short lobster tails, caught off the west coast of South America.

Pleuroncodes monodon (red crab, squat lobster, or Colorado langostino) look like shrimp with long claws. Harvested primarily from Chilean waters.

Munida gregaria (squat lobster, red whale-feed, lobster krill, or New Zealand langostino), is a small species from Australian and New Zealand waters. Like other langostinos, the adults live on the ocean bottom; however, this species has a surface-dwelling juvenile stage.



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