



It's happening! Fresh, tasty Dungeness crab will hit the market soon!

COOS BAY, OR, Dec. 21, 2015 – After months of waiting and testing for domoic acid levels in crab, Oregon health officials have determined crab along the entire Oregon Coast is safe to eat. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, in conjunction with the Oregon Department of Agriculture, agreed to open the season today.

Managers agreed fishermen can set their gear at 8 a.m. on Jan. 1 and begin harvesting crab at 9 a.m. on Jan. 4. Both Oregon and Washington will open at the same time.

“We are proud that Oregon took the high road and kept the public’s safety as the number one concern,” said Hugh Link, executive director of the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission. “The public deserves the best and that’s what consumers will get: the best Oregon Dungeness crab.”

While any crab that has been in stores and restaurants has been safe to eat, even more fresh crab will hit local markets right after New Year’s as the Oregon and Washington fisheries open.

“People who are nervous about buying or eating Dungeness crab shouldn’t be,” said Rod Moore, senior policy adviser to the West Coast Seafood Processors Association. “We have been working with the fleet, our state fisheries management agencies and the state health authorities to make sure the crab was safe to eat before the season was opened. Now that the final tests are in, we urge everyone to enjoy your Dungeness crab in the New Year.”

With ODA’s and ODFW’s approval, fishermen and processors can now begin state-supervised price negotiations. Once they agree on a price, fishermen will load their boats with pots to take to sea on Jan. 1. Crabbers will let their gear soak for 73 hours, then start pulling their gear and storing the crab on the boat to bring to processors.

“We take great pride in how the crab industry and state agencies have worked together to get the season open,” says Hugh Link. “But most of all, we appreciate the public’s patience and hope that everyone will seek out Dungeness crab, the state’s iconic crustacean, from their local seafood cases and restaurants.”

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For more information, contact:

Hugh Link, Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission: 541-267-5810

Rod Moore, West Coast Seafood Processors Association: 503-227-5076