

# "Changes in Consumer Expectations and What This Means for Producers"

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By

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# North Carolina Sea Grant Fisheries Resource Grant

May 2006 - April 2007

May 2007 - April 2008

"HARNESSING CONSUMER  
PREFERENCES TO CREATE  
NEW MARKETS FOR NORTH  
CAROLINA SEAFOOD"

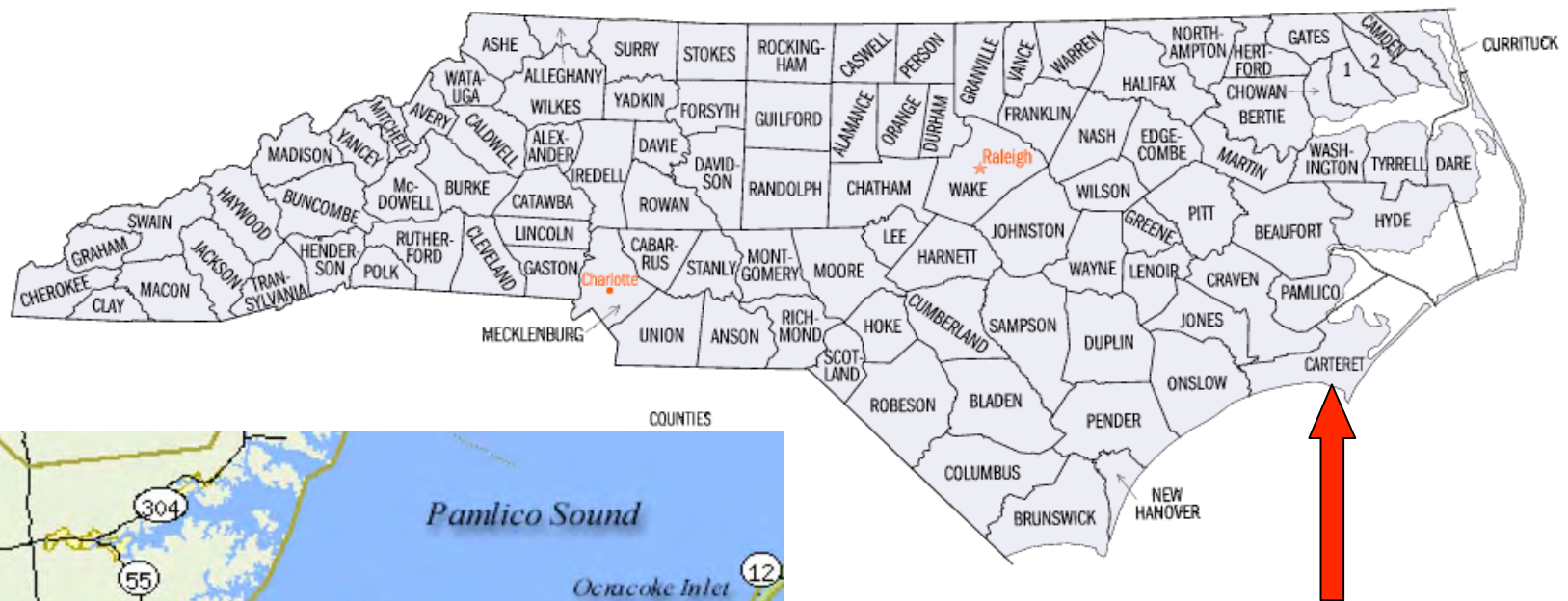
# What is Social Marketing?

Kotler and Zaltman: "an application of business marketing principles to the problem of marketing SOCIAL CHANGE"

To influence *behavior* or create a *behavioral* change rather than to influence purchase decision

# Project Objectives:

- To create a marketing program that will educate residents and visitors to seek out and purchase local seafood
- To develop niche marketing opportunities for Carteret County fishermen for local seafood
- To expand these niche marketing opportunities to be used elsewhere



Research Site:  
Carteret County

# Research Strategy

Interviews with:

- Seafood dealers
- Restaurant Owners
- Commercial fishermen
- Consumers
- Realtors and Tourism Professionals

# Interviews with Consumers

May - October 2006

Consumers  $n=295$

Short term visitors (vacationers)

Residents

New residents

Average household size = 3

Range 1 -8 household members

Average distanced traveled 271 miles

# Consumers

## What Are Their Expectations?

- 82% - It is important that the seafood we get here be local
- What is "Local" seafood?
- Why Local?
  - Because it is fresh and it tastes better 39%



## And how do you know it is local?

- I ask 23%
- You expect it at the coast 9%

## Why support Local?

- To support the local economy
- To support local fishermen

# How Can the Public Support Local Fishermen?

- Buy local seafood 64%
- Eat at places that sell local seafood
- Support local fish houses

What seafood do consumers  
most enjoy and seek out?

Shrimp



# Consumer Expectations

- A safe product
- A consistent product
- No smell

However, consumers' knowledge of the seafood industry varied

# Consumer Knowledge

- Not always aware of seasonality of seafood
- Cannot always identify species
- Not always experienced in filleting, deveining, scaling, shucking or shelling
- Not always prepared - even though they come to buy seafood
- Not always experienced in cooking seafood

# Consumers

What does size mean?

How much fish does one purchase per person for a meal?

Some want **BIG** shrimp

Some want small shrimp

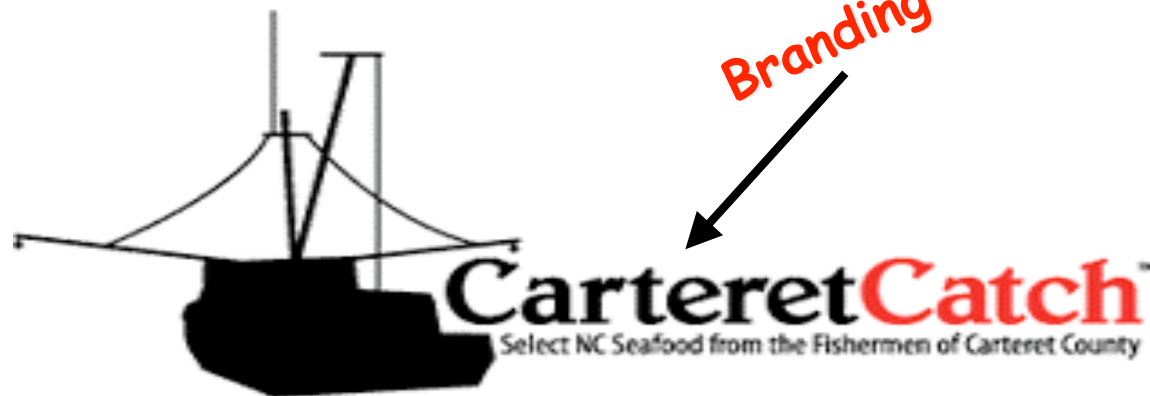
**Creates a problem:** how much should one sell bait for - and at what size?

# Places

- Restaurants
- Retail & wholesale seafood dealers
  - How do these vendors want their products delivered?
  - When do they want their product delivered?
  - In what quantities, sizes and how frequently?

# CarteretCatch™

- Ford Foundation Grant to Carteret County Community College
- Concerned citizens
- Commercial fishermen, seafood distributors
- Restaurant owners
- Fishery researchers





# Carteret **Catch**<sup>TM</sup>

*"Fresh, local, wild caught seafood"*

- From Sea:
- To Boat
- To Fish House or other dealer
- To Restaurant
- To Plate

**Develop New Market Niches**

# Public Supporting Local Markets

Direct marketing:

- Connect to fishermen
- Connect to fish house dealers
- Connect to area restaurants who buy from fishermen and dealers who buy from local fishermen

# Community Supported Fisheries (CSF)

- Based upon the concept of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
- Supports the local fishermen by buying directly from them
- Consider a seafood delivery package
- Plan for visitors/residents - to cook or to take home and freeze

# Producer Modifications

- Patience
- Coolers and Ice
- Educate Customers
- Recipes
- Website, contact numbers
- Business cards

Educate and get a message out

# Producer Modifications

- Listen to the customer or vendor
- Add \$\$ for processing: deveining, filleting, grading, shelling
- Product Availability: inform customers of seasonality of product
- "Labeling" - a North Carolina Local Product
- Be remembered for a good product, good service and experience

Thank you