

ATLANTIC STATES
MARCH 2003

MENHADEN FISHERY UPDATE

Brought to you by **Omega Protein** | Healthy Products for a Healthy America

Omega Protein has played an integral role in the coastal economy for nearly 90 years. It is the largest U.S. processor and manufacturer of heart-healthy fish oil and fish meal products derived from menhaden, a non-food species of tiny, protein-rich fish abundantly available in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico and along the mid-Atlantic Coast.

As a leader in the field, Omega Protein is actively concerned with business trends and other developments that affect the menhaden fishing industry. As such, Omega Protein has created this monthly newsletter to provide you with timely information about our industry. I trust it will serve as a beneficial resource.

I hope you share our enthusiasm about this newsletter. We welcome your comments or suggestions on how to make this publication stronger.

Sincerely,
Joe von Rosenberg
President, Omega Protein

Status of the Atlantic Menhaden Fishery

Source: Menhaden Resource Council

The Atlantic menhaden fishery, America's leading source of nutritionally desirable fish oil, is healthy and is not being over-fished, according to the latest scientific report issued by the Atlantic Menhaden Management Board (AMMB) of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

In its annual report on the status of Atlantic menhaden stock, which was approved by the AMMB at its November 19, 2002 meeting, the Board said "The status of the stock is considered healthy." That report, which is based upon the on-going scientific study of menhaden by federal and state fisheries agencies, also noted that the fishery's stock of breeding age fish "can be considered very healthy," a strong indicator that menhaden will remain abundant in the year ahead.

A relative of the herring that is found in large quantities along the Atlantic Coast and in the Gulf of Mexico, menhaden are the nation's leading source of edible fish oil, which is rich in nutritionally desirable Omega-3 fatty acids. Refined menhaden oil, which has neither a fishy taste nor odor, is used in a variety of healthy foods for human


consumption because of its high Omega-3 fatty acid content.


The American Heart Association recently recommended that Americans consume fish oil daily because the Omega-3 fatty acids it contains can cut the risk of potentially fatal irregular heartbeat associated with heart attacks, lower blood pressure and reduce the formation of blood clots which are linked to heart attacks and strokes. The Omega-3 fatty acids in menhaden oil have also been linked to a number of other health benefits, including the treatment of inflammatory disorders such as arthritis, improving brain and eye function, and easing depression.

"The menhaden resource is healthy - and it will help keep America healthy," Menhaden Resource Council spokesman Niels Moore said.

The Atlantic menhaden fishery is one of the most extensively studied of United States fisheries with scientific records dating back to the 19th Century. The fishery is managed by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, which includes fishery managers and other representatives from all 15 East Coast states.

Important Resources

 The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) was formed by the fifteen Atlantic coast states sixty years ago to assist in managing and conserving their shared coastal fishery resources. For more information please visit www.asmfc.org.

 The Menhaden Resource Council (MRC) is an educational and informational organization supported by the menhaden industry. For more information please visit www.menhaden.org.

 The National Fisheries Institute (NFI) is the leading trade association for the fish and seafood industry, and represents a wide spectrum of firms, from small family-owned businesses to large multinational corporations. The NFI is committed to helping its members succeed in the global seafood marketplace. For more information, please visit www.nfi.org.

 Omega Protein Corporation (NYSE: OME) is the largest U.S. processor and manufacturer of heart-healthy fish oil and fish meal products derived from menhaden, a non-food species of tiny, protein-rich fish abundantly available in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico and along the mid-Atlantic Coast. For more information, please visit www.omegaproteininc.com.