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Sustainable seafood helps spread Christmas cheer

The onset of Christmas is traditionally a time when big numbers of West Australians celebrate with seafood as a major feature of their festive menus.

Western Australian Fishing Industry Council (WAFIC) Chief Executive Officer John Harrison and several professional fishers used a special media bbq to highlight some of the sensational seafood options available to consumers.

“Western Australia’s seafood is not only premium quality and world-class, all our fish come from sustainable, well managed fisheries,” Mr Harrison said today at a special barbeque showcasing locally caught prawns, octopus, lobster, fish and crabs.

Mr Harrison said that in the past year each of WA’s 45+ commercial fisheries had completed the pre-assessment phase of the Marine Stewardship Council’s independent third-party certification process to determine sustainable management.

During the same period a number of fisheries underwent the full assessment process and the MSC had subsequently certified WA’s Shark Bay and Exmouth Gulf prawn fisheries. The certification of the two prawn fisheries had seen them join the already MSC-certified Western Rock Lobster and Patagonian toothfish fisheries.

“Currently the Deep Sea crab, Peel-Harvey Blue Swimmer crab and Sea mullet and WA’s pearl fisheries are undergoing the MSC’s full assessment process and a number of other fisheries are about to enter the process,” Mr Harrison said.

“MSC certification means the relevant fishery has achieved the world’s most rigorous benchmark for sustainability and it offers consumers greater certainty that the seafood they buy comes from sustainably managed fisheries.

“Choosing WA seafood for Christmas and New Year means you can be assured of eating top quality seafood from fisheries that are among the very best managed in the world.

“There is also substantial evidence suggesting that eating seafood two or three times a week can help lower cholesterol and reduce the risk of heart disease – among other health benefits.”

The WAFIC website (www.wafic.org.au) has a big number of delicious seafood recipes and 17 videos giving very clear instructions on how to cook fish.

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