



P.O. Box 96
Menemsha, MA 02552

MARTHA'S VINEYARD FISHERMEN'S PRESERVATION TRUST

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



Photo by Larry Glick

DEAR FRIEND,

It has been another exciting year for us with new and expanded programs servicing our core mission of positive impact on our island commercial fishing industry. Our creation and implementation of the island's first Community Seafood Fishery share program and sales of fresh seafood at the West Tisbury Farmers Market allowed us to have a new market for fishermen and a direct way to share our love and support of our fishing fleet. At the same time, we ramped up our Seafood Donation program, aimed to help with food insecurity by distributing high-quality seafood to all community members, launched a new revolving loan program, and continued our collaborative research work on fishing vessels. Together, these new and expanded programs benefited many: fishermen, community members, and fish populations. As we continue to fine-tune our work, crucial grants and the generous support of individual donors like you make it possible for the implementation and continuation of these benefits. We thank you.

Going forward we still face many challenges. Just like any island operation these days, recruiting and retaining key personnel remains a problem, with housing being a reliable obstacle. As fishermen retire, we need to be ready to assist in securing their permits for the next generation. Again, your generous support helps sustain and steady our operations and programs through the choppy waters ahead. Throughout all these barriers, we continue to find creative solutions to help our fishermen harvest seafood for the community.

Again, we thank you.



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Safeguarding Martha's Vineyard's fishing heritage and future by supporting the island's small-boat, owner-operated fishing fleets and their sustainably harvested catch



Photo by Brooke Bartletta

MV SEAFOOD COLLABORATIVE

Expanding our Impact

We just concluded our third season running the Seafood Collaborative, our wholesale seafood market in Menemsha which aims to support local fishermen and provide sustainably caught, high-quality seafood for the island. Thanks to a number of generous grants, we were able to expand our infrastructure and programming to address our core mission—keeping fishermen fishing and providing equitable access to local seafood throughout the island. These efforts include expanding our waterfront infrastructure, supporting neighbors experiencing food insecurity through our ever-growing Seafood Donations program, increasing our visibility via the West Tisbury Farmers Market, and offering a new way to purchase local seafood via our Community Supported Fishery (CSF) shares.

The Seafood Collaborative's facility continued to offer helpful infrastructure to our island's fishermen and seafood businesses contributing to a vibrant commercial fishing community and waterfront. Thanks to a generous grant from Love, Tito's, we were able to purchase and install a new gin boom (or hydraulic crane, pictured right, used to lift heavy catch and equipment) which lifted approximately 20,000 lbs of seafood and supplies throughout the season.

In addition, with help from the MV Bank Charitable Foundation, we were able to purchase an industrial flash freezer. This freezing technique not only produced high-quality frozen products, but it provided stability to what is traditionally an unpredictable industry. This stability allowed us to purchase and store more local seafood and distribute it steadily throughout the summer and fall via the Farmers Market, our CSF program, and our Seafood Donation program.

All of the Seafood Collaborative's great work was led by our manager, Phoebe Walsh, under a Vineyard Vision Fellowship Grant. While Phoebe will be heading back to her home state of Maine this winter, she leaves behind a stronger, more refreshed waterfront and a solid foundation for the next chapter.



Community Supported Fishery (CSF)

We are proud to say that our Community Supported Fishery (CSF) share program was the first of its kind on the island! Throughout the summer and fall, subscribers to the CSF picked up a monthly spread of beautiful vacuum-packed, flash-frozen, locally-caught seafood at the West Tisbury Farmers Market. We distributed 50 summer and fall shares, which contained species such as sea scallops, fluke, black sea bass, tautog, bonito, striped bass, yellowfin tuna, tilefish, and more. At the Farmers Market, we also sold live lobsters, and whatever was fresh from the boats that week. Our seafood packages were individually labeled with the fishing vessel or fisherman who did the harvesting, allowing the consumer to know the local fishermen they were supporting. We had a tremendous response to both the CSF and our presence at the Farmers Market, and we're excited to continue both programs next year!



Seafood Donation Program

Food insecurity is on the rise on the island. With the support of Love, Titos and individual donors we were able to donate 25,000 seafood meal servings this season to local programs like Island Grown Initiative, The First Congregational Church of West Tisbury, The Red House, and the Martha's Vineyard Boys and Girls Club. These organizations work tirelessly to ease food insecurity and improve equitable access to quality foods. We plan to grow our donation program next year, with generous grants from the MV Community Foundation and Slough Farm Foundation. We continue to seek more ways to keep local seafood on the island and on the plates of those who need it most.

Please consider joining our efforts! By donating you will create a new market for fishermen to sell their fresh catch, strengthen our local food network, reduce food waste and most importantly, make local seafood accessible to local families!



Bay Scallops with Ginger-Orange Sauce and Asian Greens

Recipe by Catherine Walthers as published on BlueDotLiving.com, November 1, 2023

Ingredients

- 3/4 – 1 pound bay scallops
- 2 or 3 bunches of baby bok choy, end of bulb sliced off, leaves rinsed
- 1 cup fresh orange juice (from 3 juicy oranges)
- 4 ginger coins, sliced from peeled fresh ginger
- 2 1/2 tablespoons butter (divided)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Orange slices, sliced

Instructions

Remove the tiny side muscle where sand can hide and rinse the scallops. Dry with a paper towel. Set aside.

In a skillet, sauté the bok choy until wilted, but still crunchy. Set aside.

Start the sauce by adding the fresh orange juice and ginger coins to a saucepan. Bring to a boil, and then simmer on medium-high for about 6 to 8 minutes to reduce to about 1/2 cup. Remove ginger coins and remove from heat. Add 2 tablespoons cold butter, cut into pieces, and swirl off the heat, stirring with a whisk or wooden spoon until butter is incorporated and sauce is nicely thickened.

If using 1 pound of scallops, heat two cast-iron or thick-bottom pans over medium-high heat. (Two pans helps scallops brown nicely.) Add 1/2 tablespoon of butter and 1 tablespoon of olive oil to coat. Sear scallops on one side, about 2 minutes, until golden. Season with salt and pepper as you are cooking. Turn and sear the other side, 1 to 2 minutes more.

Rewarm the bok choy and then place in the center of the plate with jasmine rice. Divide scallops onto 4 plates. Spoon the sauce around the scallops. Garnish with a slice from an orange.



Photo by Catherine Walthers

Have a favorite recipe to share?

In an effort to connect our community with the fishermen harvesting our food, the MVFPT is in the early stages of creating a cookbook. The book will highlight our fishermen and their stories and will include an array of delicious recipes that showcase the best that our local waters have to offer.

If you have a favorite recipe that you would like to share, please email us at info@mvfpt.org!

Meet the Fleet Returns!

Our Meet the Fleet 2023 drew another large and celebratory crowd. We returned with a harbor full of local fishing vessels, our ever-popular kids' activities—fish printing and crab racing—and sold out of most sizes of our new sea-green colored MVFPT t-shirts. Fishermen donned red immersion suits (nicknamed Gumby suits) and jumped off the fuel dock and raced to a waiting U.S. Coast Guard vessel. Immersion suits assist with both flotation and insulation and are critical safety gear when commercially fishing. The Environmental Police showcased their 50ft vessel the Thomas Payne, and The U.S. Coast Guard demonstrated the skill and risks of a helicopter rescue at sea off of Menemsha Beach. MVSC's Isaac Richards explained how to filet a freshly caught yellowfin tuna, and as always, rivalry was fierce in our sea scallop-shucking, net-mending and (for the first time) line-splicing, competitions. We offered fresh Menemsha Creek Oysters at the raw bar skillfully operated by Outkast Oysters, with MVSC operations manager Phoebe Walsh and fisherman Will Diamond adding shucking assistance to the over 1,000 shucked oysters. Larsen's Fish Market offered a delicious, zesty sea scallop ceviche special, with all proceeds going to our work. Johnny Hoy and the Bluefish, The Philly Project, and Dock Dance Band were our musical backdrop throughout the afternoon, and we wrapped up the day exhausted, but happy as another stellar Menemsha sunset slipped over the horizon.



Photo by Brooke Bartletta

Thank you to our Meet the Fleet Sponsors!

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¹in memory of Will Holtham

²in memory of Conrad Neumann



Photo by JJ Oldershaw



Photo by Larry Glick



Photo by JJ Oldershaw



Photo by Brooke Bartletta

Revolving Loan Program

Also in pursuit of our core mission, we were able to expand fishermen's access to fishing permits by launching a Revolving Loan Program. This program allows fishermen to apply for loans to assist with the purchase of crucial permits. Obtaining mainstream loans for fishing permits has many hurdles. Our program requires fishermen to demonstrate that they have a commitment to the community, a sound business plan, and that they utilize sustainable fishing practices. So far, we have assisted one fisherman in securing a loan to purchase a suite of permits to help build his business. We are working to partner with more lending institutions to expand the impact of this program.



Fishery Innovations

Our scientific work continued as we maintained our quest to find an effective alternative bait for conch fisherman to replace the beloved horseshoe crab. We tested new bait blends throughout the season in coordinated efforts with the lab at the University of New Hampshire. Our interns Pierce Aymond and Tegan Gale helped to execute this project with assistance from *F/V Sea Raven*, *F/V Right Stuff*, and *F/V Little Feat*. We are hopeful that one of these recipes will be a winner, but more field trials are needed.

In addition to bait, Tegan investigated the impacts that escape vents have on a catch. Escape vents have been shown in laboratory settings to catch more efficiently and have less impact on sublegal whelks. Throughout the fall, Tegan documented vent interactions in the field using the Whelk TV apparatus from his *F/V Watch Out*.



Tegan Gale checks a trap equipped with escape vents.

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P.O. Box 96
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Scanning the QR Code (above)

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MVFishermensPreservationTrust.org/donate

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