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Seafood cells: Certified Quality Reader looks to improve, organize fish quality data



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CQR Rolls out new software, waterproof reader.

Alaska-based company Certified Quality Foods is trying to improve the way the seafood industry collects, organizes and analyzes quality data of fish up and down the supply chain. Co-founder Keith Cox, who has a PhD in fish physiology and bioenergetics, worked for years to develop the Certified Quality Reader, a device that collects cellular data on seafood quality.

Certified Quality Foods partner and vice president Chuck Anderson, a longtime grocery store seafood buyer, explained that the device has four electrodes that send electricity through the fish, which then rebound back to the handheld reader.

“We’re essentially measuring the cells to determine how fresh the fish is. Depending on how fast or slow it comes back, we can determine how much water and fat is in and around the cells. And once you can determine that, you can tell a lot,” Anderson said.

“To evaluate seafood products, the FDA uses organoleptics; sight, smell, texture. You have to be able to differentiate between 30 different smells, and these scores were very subjective, making for very noisy data,” Cox said, adding these scores were generally handwritten and then digitized, making them difficult to compile and analyze.

After working with their original version of the Certified Quality Reader with everyone from major processors like Trident Seafoods and Icicle Seafoods to independent fishermen, Cox and Anderson took feedback and went back to work.

For smaller processors and direct marketers, the Certified Quality Reader can pinpoint top quality when it is time to make market.

“They are able to tell buyers that certain fish is in the top 5 percent of what they got for the season. They can say, ‘This is the best fish that came out of Bristol Bay this season,’ and they can charge more for it,” Chuck Anderson said.



About the Author

Brian Hagenbuch

Brian Hagenbuch is National Fisherman’s products editor, a contributing editor to SeafoodSource and a Bristol Bay fisherman. He is based in Seattle.

The image shows the cover of National Fisherman magazine, featuring a fisherman in a boat and the headline 'Steel trap'.

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