

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

Presented at the North Carolina
Aquaculture Conference
January 19, 2008

By

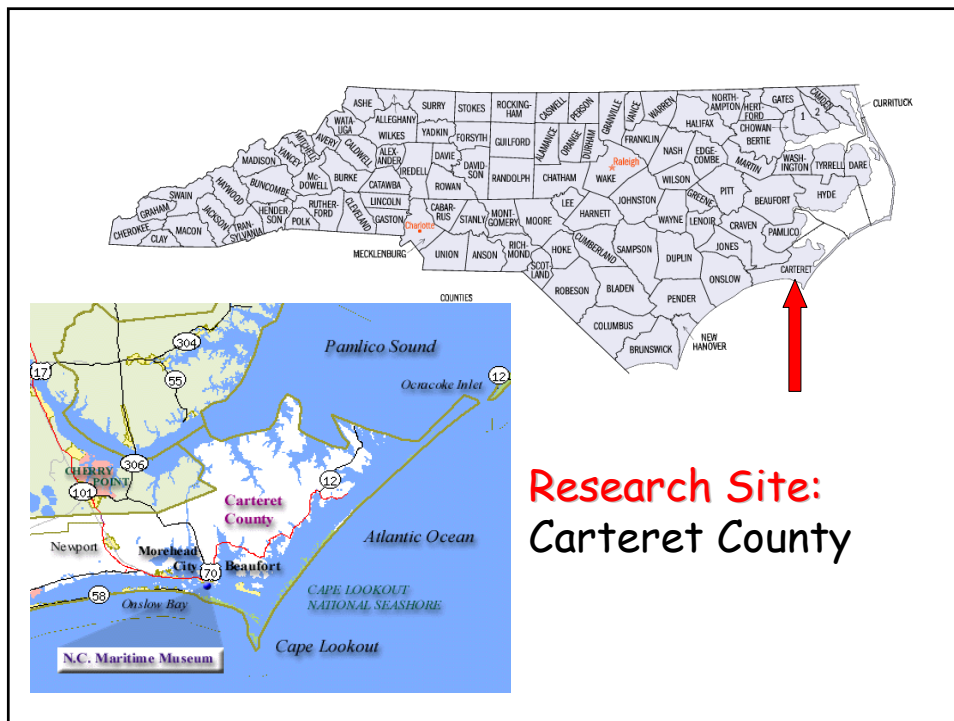
Susan Andreatta, Ph.D.
The University of North Carolina
at Greensboro
Department of Anthropology

**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"**

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 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?

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