

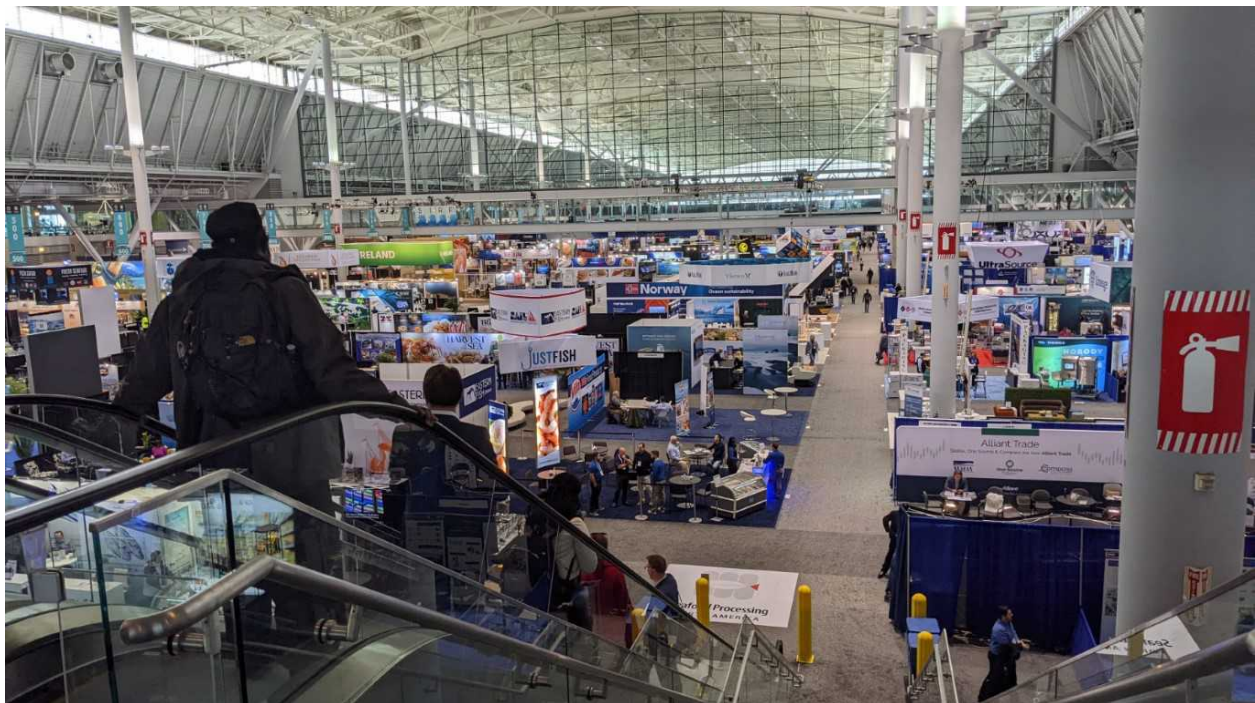
# Pacific Urchin Harvesters Association Pacific Sea Cucumber Harvesters Association

## Trip Report for the 2022 Seafood Expo North America

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Fraser Rieche and Geoff Krause attended the 2022 Seafood Expo North America (SENA) in Boston in mid March. There are usually have more than just a couple of representatives attending this show on our behalf but circumstances meant everyone else was busy. Lawrence Anderson was planning on joining us but was diving geoduck up in Haida Gwaii and unfortunately could not get off the boat. Fraser and I did manage to put forth a credible presence at the information counter and meet with what turned out to be a good variety of people.



This was of course the first seafood expo/show of any significance held in the past 2 years. The last scheduled such event, SENA 2020, was cancelled because of the COVID pandemic that has shut down so much of what we considered normal in the days prior to its emergence. When the organizers of the show were first publicizing the re-initiation of the show earlier this year, they highlighted the many safety precautions involved, most especially mask and vaccine mandates that would be in place. However by the time everything rolled out these had been cancelled. It seemed strange after the past couple of years, but also kind of liberating, that these were dropped but some exhibitors did not feel comfortable with that and pulled out even though the rental spaces was paid for and non-refundable. The BC booth itself was incorporated more closely into the Canadian Pavilion and shared space that has previously been all taken up by the “Maritimes”. They too had limited interest for the show and it just made sense to consolidate the space.

The booth in previous years included a cooking station for Nathan Fong, a celebrity chef from Vancouver who prepared samples of the seafood on offer from BC companies attending. This year - not so much. I am still including a picture of him here though because he was a steady presence at the BC booth at all the shows and his skills and enthusiasm were always a great hit. He passed away in late March 2020 and continues to be missed by many BC exhibitors among others who had the pleasure of knowing him.



Nathan Fong 1959 - 2020 RIP

The BC booth at previous iterations of the SENA comprised upwards of 12 information tables situated around the margins of a 50' x 20' rectangular space, a display cooler and probably 15 or so meeting tables set up in the central area so attending companies could hold meetings with buyers and potential customers. It was a pretty much standardized setup that worked well so in the spirit of not fixing that which is not broken, the dimensions of the booth this year were actually pretty much unchanged. There were however fewer companies participating so the number of information counters was reduced to 6 and the space between them was increased from about 0.5 m to something closer to 2 m., as can be seen in the following two pictures.



BC booth at 2019 SENA



BC Booth at the 2022 SENA

The same sort of dispersion was seen throughout the show as it seemed everything was spaced out and less crowded. On top of that here were many spaces apparently intended for booths that were not present and there were lots of large resting and sitting areas scattered throughout the show. It was all actually quite comfortable and uncrowded, which was reassuring given that the pandemic is not yet really over, but it also subtly camouflaged the lower numbers in attendance.

As a quick summary we collected about 2/3 the number of contacts from the previous show (40 in 2022 vs 56 in 2019) and there was a not-bad mix of people expressing interest learn more about BC dive fisheries. As can be seen in the following table which compares the results from the SENA over the years, American visitors comprised a larger proportion of the total this year, again, something not surprising because of the global travel restrictions because of the ongoing pandemic. I expect if prepared samples were available, we would have had higher numbers but it is hard to know how much real difference it would make on serious prospects. Usually we have a couple of delegates who are actually active in either the fishery or the trade and who bring an extra element of novelty or authenticity – but I think we did OK.

Looking at the brochures that were picked up, urchin brochures in Simplified Mandarin were way down from previous years while the traditional versions (Cantonese) were not much different from 2019. This was only the second year that sea cucumber brochures were tracked so while it is clearly insufficient to conclude much of significance, the number of English sea cucumber brochures circulated in 2019 was just less than half the number of the English urchin brochures but just less than a quarter this year. Interestingly the number of Simplified cuke brochures distributed (12) was not much lower than the number in 2019 (17), though this number basically equalled the number of English cuke brochures as opposed to being about 1/3 in 2019. Still, I think it is safe to conclude that the number of Chinese, and especially from Mainland China, attending the show was down substantially this year though it is notable that the number of Simplified Mandarin cuke brochures did not decline as much as the English versions between 2019 and 2022. It may be that there is less interest from US/Canadian based interests in finding/sourcing product even if only to trade with China, though speculating much on this is a bit of a stretch at this point given the limited data available.

Table 1: Comparative metrics looking solely at the SENA results over the years.

	2022			2019			2018			2017			2016		
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
# of visitors qualified	24	14	3	28	23	5	27	27	10	23	11	10	31	14	9
% for show	57%	33%	7%	50%	41%	9%	42%	42%	16%	52%	25%	23%	57%	26%	17%
average score	4.8	4.3	4.1	5.2	4.4	3.8	4.8	4.2	5.1	5.35	4.35	4.8	6.39	4.86	5.78
non N. American	16.0%	14.3%	66.7%	21.4%	26.1%	20.0%	29.6%	29.6%	10.0%	30.4%	36.4%	20.0%	9.7%	28.6%	55.6%
USA	76.0%	50.0%	33.3%	35.7%	43.5%	20.0%	33.3%	55.6%	60.0%	43.5%	18.2%	50.0%	54.8%	50.0%	22.2%
Canada	8.0%	35.7%	0.0%	42.9%	30.4%	60.0%	37.0%	14.8%	30.0%	21.7%	45.5%	30.0%	22.6%	21.4%	22.2%
Brochures- Urchins															
- traditional	4	5	0	3	5	0	6	17	5	5	20	13	0	0	0
- simplified	0	0	0	4	19	5	20	15	5	10	5	5	0	0	0
- English	36	20	4	62	50	10	47	33	8	85	50	50	110	65	48
- Japanese	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
- French	2	0	0												
Brochures- Cukes															
-English	8	4	1	29	17	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
-simplified	8	4	0	6	8	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total- all languages	58	33	5	69	74	15	73	65	18	100	75	68	110	65	48
% for show	60%	34%	5%	44%	47%	9%	47%	42%	12%	41%	31%	28%	49%	29%	21%
# brochures/# visitors	2.42	2.36	1.67	2.46	3.22	3.00	2.70	2.41	1.80	4.35	6.82	6.80	3.55	4.64	5.33

We did have some visitors from Asia - or perhaps it was just people based in the US representing Asian companies - but enquiries were made for supplies to Asia, especially Korea and China, the Middle East and of course all regions for the US, including Hawaii. There were quite a number of buyers who were concerned about problems in California where the kelp and the urchin production has been dramatically affected by adverse (very warm) ocean conditions. This is expected to grow in years ahead as global climate change makes itself more widely felt. There were also a number of customers aware of problems with alum typically used in urchin processing and interest in developing alternatives. A summary of contacts and some of their comments comprise the tables on the following page.

Table 2: Contact list from Day 1 of the 2022 SENA

Country	City	Business	First Name	Last Name	Company	Score	Website	Comment(s)
USA	Portland(?) OR	ttrader	Simon	Shin	Right Side Harvest	3		asking about fresh shipments in formats suitable for Korea
USA	Wickliff, KY	proc/exporter			Two Rivers Fisheries Inc.	3	<a href="http://www.tworiversfisheries.com">www.tworiversfisheries.com</a>	appear to be a carp processor and exporter
USA	Flushing NY	trader			Qun Sheng Trading Inc.	4		buys uni, cukes and ducks for China, mainly from AK and WA
USA	Houston TX	trader	Danial	Ohh	Lifewood USA Inc.	6	<a href="http://www.lifewoodco.com">www.lifewoodco.com</a>	looking for up to 500 kg/wk- suggest Mike as contact (card)
USA	Philadelphia	trader	Joseph	Sarcona	Samuels Seafood Co.	5	<a href="http://www.samuelsseafood.com">www.samuelsseafood.com</a>	a scout for buyers from Philadelphia
USA	Fall River MA	producer/trader	David	Jedrey	Atlantic Capes Fisheries Ltd.	6	<a href="http://www.atlanticcapes.com">www.atlanticcapes.com</a>	vertically integrated fishing co, looking for whole live urchin for E. coast
USA	Elizabeth NJ	trader	Sang-Su	Choe	True World Foods New York LLC	6	<a href="http://www.trueworldfoods.com">www.trueworldfoods.com</a>	looking for sushi shop supply (cases/wk), also interested in other prods, w c'tact
Canada	Richmond BC	packaging	Avi	Sull	Richmond Packaging	4	<a href="http://www.richmondpkg.com">www.richmondpkg.com</a>	
Senegal		producer?	Xiaoqing	Huang	Tamou Fishing International SARL	4	<a href="http://www.tamou.sn">www.tamou.sn</a>	
USA	Roswell GA	retail (online)	Nicholas	Yohn	Hook'd Up Seafood	5	<a href="http://www.hookdupseafood.com">www.hookdupseafood.com</a>	website still being developed, on-line retail, new
Chile	Santiago	producer	Rodolfo	Kantor	Proyecta Corp.	5	<a href="http://www.proyecta.cl">www.proyecta.cl</a>	processor interested in new pasteurization process
Canada	Dartmouth	gear	Clinton	Desveaux	Sevaen Workwear	6	<a href="http://www.sevaengear.com">www.sevaengear.com</a>	foul weather gear manufacturer in Halifax- all Canadian made
USA	San Francisco CA	whole +online retail	Michael	Willing	Aloha Seafood	6	<a href="http://www.alohaseafood.net">www.alohaseafood.net</a>	knowledgeable about urchins
USA	Miami FL	wholesale	Martin	Viana	Patagonian Sea Products	6	<a href="http://www.patagonian-sea.com">www.patagonian-sea.com</a>	distributes to about 30 restaurants, looking for trays
USA	Westbury NY	restaurant	Jay	Lin	Fuxin USA Inc.	4		
USA	Westbury NY	restaurant	Guo Zhen	Chen	Fuxin USA Inc.	4		caviar e-sales as well, apparently looking for uni trays into NY
India	Kochi (Kerala)	trader	Kumatorry	Sreekumar	Mor Aquafresh	4	<a href="http://www.moraquafresh.com">www.moraquafresh.com</a>	offices in India and Gunagzhou, variety of products, no discussion undertaken
USA	Bronx NY	retail markets	Jeremy	Park	Captain Blue LLC	4	<a href="http://www.hmart.com">www.hmart.com</a>	fresh delivery services, Korean convenience foods
USA	Bronx NY	retail markets	Jinki	Bae	Captain Blue LLC	4	<a href="http://www.hmart.com">www.hmart.com</a>	fresh delivery services, Korean convenience foods
Japan	Tokyo	trader	Alex	Saito	Gourmet Global	3		questionable website-0 malware warning
USA	Anaheim CA	retail	Robert	Koep	Jetro Cash and Carry	5	<a href="http://www.jetro.com">www.jetro.com</a>	also <a href="http://www.restaurantdepot.com">www.restaurantdepot.com</a>
USA	Burgaw NC	trader	Johnny	Chen	Hare Asian Trading, LLC	5	<a href="http://www.hareasiantrading.com">www.hareasiantrading.com</a>	looks like an importer into US from Asia
USA	LaCrosse WI	logistics	Alex	Jeffrey	Electruck Logistics, LLC	4	<a href="http://www.electrucklogistics.com">www.electrucklogistics.com</a>	looking to provide transport services in US
USA	Rochester NY	distributor	Michael	McNicholas	Culinary Collaborations	8	<a href="http://www.culinary-collaborations.com">www.culinary-collaborations.com</a>	needs alum free, has access to largest markets in US, all grades
USA	New York	restaurant	Peter	Molinari	Eataly alti cibi	7		hi end restaurants in NY, LA, Boston, Chicago, Toronto. Also- e-commerce

Table 3: Contact list from Day 2 of the 2022 SENA

Country	City	Business	First Name	Last Name	Company	Score	Website	Comment(s)
USA	Portsmouth NH	AQC certification	Keiko	Pasterczyk	Global Seafood Alliance	3	<a href="http://www.globalseafood.org">www.globalseafood.org</a>	
USA	Miami FL	wholesale	Elmer	Olivares	Legend Seafood USA	4	<a href="http://www.legendseafoodusa.com">www.legendseafoodusa.com</a>	website under development, apparently seeking products for restaurants
Canada	Burnaby BC	online retail w delivery	Grace	Chen	Sungiven Foods	6	<a href="http://www.sungivenfoods.ca">www.sungivenfoods.ca</a>	online order (with delivery?) of a variety of foods- incl. seafood
Canada	Burnaby BC	online retail w delivery	Billy	Luo	Sungiven Foods	4	<a href="http://www.sungivenfoods.ca">www.sungivenfoods.ca</a>	online order (with delivery?) of a variety of foods- incl. seafood
USA	San Diego CA	distributor	Charly	Cervantes	Baja Sea Distributors Inc.	4		
Mauritania	Nouadibou	producer (new)	Moustapha	Sidi Med	SMMCS Sarl	2	<a href="http://www.friadfrigo.com">www.friadfrigo.com</a>	website unreachable
USA	Norcross GA	online retail/ delivery	Pacifico (Podge)	Sgambato	Farmers & Fishermen Purveyors	5	<a href="http://www.farmersandfishermen.com">www.farmersandfishermen.com</a>	
USA	Miami FL	restaurant	Aaron	Pate	Omakai Sushi	5	<a href="http://www.omakaisushi.com">www.omakaisushi.com</a>	
USA	Miami FL	restaurant	Diego	Quijada	Omakai Sushi	5	<a href="http://www.omakaisushi.com">www.omakaisushi.com</a>	
Canada		payments	Frank	Zawislak	Western Union	3		was supposed to send email- probably went to puha@telus.net
USA	San Mateo CA	wholesale	Jeffrey	Su	Kiyoi Inc.	5	<a href="http://www.kyoi-inc.com">www.kyoi-inc.com</a>	
Canada	Parksville BC	processor/exp	David	Ban	French Creek Seafood Ltd.	5	<a href="http://www.frenchcreek.ca">www.frenchcreek.ca</a>	new manager at French Creek
Venezuela	Miramar	importer	Christian	Salazar	Agroalimentos Venezuela	3	<a href="http://www.agroalimentosvzla.com">www.agroalimentosvzla.com</a>	quick query- then gone
Canada	North Vancouver BC	broker	Robert	Shaw	SeaAgra	4	<a href="http://www.seaagraseafood.com">www.seaagraseafood.com</a>	looks like they deal in a number of BC products- salmon, sablefish,

Table 4: Contact list from Day 3 of the 2022 SENA

Country	City	Business	First Name	Last Name	Company	Score	Website	Comment(s)
Kuwait	Safat	distributor + etail	Johnny	Issa	Fresh Express International Foodstuff Trading L	6	<a href="http://www.freshexpressintl.com">www.freshexpressintl.com</a>	distrib of premium foods , active in Gulf Region since 1993
Peru	Lima	supplier	Humberto	Olivera	Perupez	3	<a href="http://www.perupez.com">www.perupez.com</a>	very dated website = lost points
USA	Norcross GA	processor/import/dist	Jack	Huang	Galaxy Global International	4	<a href="http://www.gqifoods.com">www.gqifoods.com</a>	

All in all, the show was I think better than I really expected it would be, the exit from the pandemic being as close as it was. I think quite a few people were concerned about the pandemic and reluctant to step out too much but that is to be expected after what's been happening for the past couple of years. It was really nice getting out and doing something different and I think we all contributed to making a positive impression on people who visited the show. More of course would be better, It is always better to have people who are directly involved in the fishing so they can talk with visitors authentically about the fishery and expectations for the future as well as some company reps involved in the sale of the products so they can actually talk terms etc., but I think just by making the effort to put in an appearance we earn some points with people interested in developing business with people they feel they can trust.

I expect we will get some extra guys coming along next year especially if the pandemic and those other things in Europe and Asia settle down but also if the latter do not because that would well suggest other market options might be shrinking. I think it is important to keep a presence at this show and feel this year it provided an awesome opportunity to test the waters (so to speak). As I mentioned to Marilyn, the BC government representative who puts it all together each year, we do hope to return next year. She could not provide any guarantees of course but many of the companies represented in the booth felt it would be beneficial to have someone preparing samples for visitors. It is a tremendous draw for any booth and is a great way to introduce our products and draw people in closer to talk about them.

One other point worth making about the show this year, I stayed at a hotel within walking distance- the Hampton Inn Boston Seaport to be exact, and it was awesome. Just being able to wander over without having to time everything out for traffic, and buses and all was very convenient and highly recommended. There are now a number of good restaurants in the area within easy walking distance and it just feels better to be able to attend or leave the show at will.

