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**Prawn
Farmers**
ASSOCIATION

25th March 2015.

PRAWN FARMERS URGE FEDERAL MP'S, SENATORS - NOT TO BUCKLE AND FOLD AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

BIPARTISANSHIP NEEDED TO END SEAFOOD CONSUMERS CONFUSION OVER THE ORIGIN OF WHAT THEY BUY IN RESTAURANTS AND TAKEAWAYS.

In making the call the Australian Prawn Farmers remind all federal politicians - consumers will continue to be kept ignorant, while the current "gap" in the country of origin labelling for cooked or pre-prepared seafood sold by the food services sectors remains.

For too long seafood lovers have been systematically misled and kept in the dark by the omission of CoOL for all cooked seafood.

Changing the law to ensure all fish sold in restaurants and takeaways must be labelled "Australian" or "Imported" is a simple, much need initiative which will give consumers clarity and confidence in making their choice and would eliminate the possibility of any rip offs from product substitution.

The one word labelling description formula was put forward by APFA and recommended by a Senate Inquiry into seafood labelling late last year.

APFA President, Matt West said consumers interests should be first and foremost and our politicians must summon up the political will and support the draft bill to legislate the change.

"For far to long this vexatious issue has been examined then put in the too hard basket.

"Our politicians must not buckle and fold at the eleventh hour," West warned.

"Glen Sterle, Labor Senator who headed the Senate Inquiry has said - ' the hard work's already been done. We've had the public hearings, we have the evidence and we've written our report,' - and APFA agrees the time for action is here and now.

"There is growing support across party lines for Senator Nick Xenophon draft bill which keeps the CoOL change as simple as possible. My executive urges everyone from the prime minister down to wholeheartedly back the change.

Australian Prawn Farmers Association

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"And we take great heart too from key National Party Senators Barry O'Sullivan and John William's support and urging the government colleagues to back the seafood industry's call.

"A win, win, win for consumers, restaurateurs and the wild caught and seafood farming sectors has become very evident in the Northern Territory after the seafood origin law was extended into dining venues there.

"We expect this beneficial outcome will be replicated nationwide, boosting regional economies and employment prospects." Mr West predicts.

The National Seafood Industry Alliance backs APFA's call for all members of parliament to support the change stating - "consumers at dining venues commonly perceive their seafood to be locally sourced or at least produced in Australia. The omission of country of origin labelling on menus misleads consumers into believing the seafood they purchase has been locally produced.

"Many customers have strong preference for Australian seafood and the industry wants to ensure it is not priced out by products not clearly labelled with their country of origin," said Grahame Turk, Chairman, NSIA.

Prawn farmers, other aquaculture sectors and wild fisheries have long held concerns regarding biosecurity, hygiene and other issues regarding farming practices in overseas operations and more and more consumers are becoming aware of inadequate safety regulations applying outside Australia.

Seafood lovers when buying Australian sourced and grown fish are assured of a clean, green, sustainable product as both state and federal governments insist our fisheries management is strictly controlled and regulated.

Matt West
President
APFA

Helen Jenkins
Executive Officer
APFA

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