

Julie Sande
Commissioner

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Department of Commerce,
Community, and
Economic Development

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STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

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Made in Alaska Manufacturer of the Year Award Presented to Copper River Seafoods



Pictured L to R: DCCED Commissioner Julie Sande, Cassandra Squibb, CMO, Brandi Zeman, CFO, Bryan Kimball, Executive VP

Tuesday, August 13th, 2024 (Anchorage, AK)— The Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development (DCCED) presented the 2023 Manufacturer of the Year Award to Copper River Seafoods at an award ceremony Tuesday, August 6th. Commissioner Julie Sande gave remarks and toured the fish processing facility in downtown Anchorage.

“Copper River Seafoods has created one of the most recognizable brands in the seafood industry today,” said **DCCED Commissioner Sande**. “In recent years, Copper River Seafoods has also been an innovator in its field by utilizing seafood byproducts and offcuts. By ensuring that the entire fish is marketable - not just the prime cuts of every filet - the company has reduced waste and created more value for the Alaska seafood resources they process. I am proud to present this award to Copper River Seafoods and look forward to witnessing their future success and innovations.”

Copper River Seafoods was founded in 1996 when fourth-generation commercial fisherman Scott Blake banded together with three other Alaskan fishermen to create a company that would specialize in harvesting, purchasing, processing, and delivering wild-caught Alaska seafood. Copper River Seafoods has grown from small beginnings in Cordova, Alaska into a leader in the Alaska wild seafood

industry, employing over 700 people at its peak summer salmon season and supplying seafood to markets in Alaska and throughout the world.

Copper River Seafoods has been a key player in ensuring food security in Alaska, supplying local food to local distributors, retailers, and food service businesses in the State. In collaboration with the Anchorage School District (ASD), Copper River Seafoods was awarded a Partnerships for Local Agriculture and Nutrition Transformation in Schools (PLANTS) grant from the United States Department of Agriculture to increase the volume of local food served in Anchorage schools. ASD is one of only eight school districts nationwide to be awarded this grant. Through this grant program, Copper River Seafoods and the Anchorage School District will be able to serve more wild Alaska seafood throughout Anchorage K-12 schools.

Copper River Seafoods is growing Alaska's economy through its numerous business partnerships. The company networks with fishermen throughout Alaska to purchase a variety of wild seafood, such as halibut, cod, rockfish, and salmon, to deliver to customers in the state, the nation, and around the world. They work with several seafood delivery services throughout the United States, including Vital Choice and Alaska Fresh, which offer a convenient way for consumers to receive premium quality Alaska seafood delivered directly to their homes.

"This award is special because it acknowledges our founders' dedication to establishing our headquarters in Alaska, creating year-round jobs in the state's seafood industry, and our commitment to manufacturing premium quality products locally. By doing so, we're able to contribute to the local economy and supply the local market to ensure food security for our fellow Alaskans," said **Cassandra Squibb, Chief Marketing Officer** at Copper River Seafoods.

DCCED would like to congratulate Copper River Seafoods on being named the 2023 Made in Alaska Manufacturer of the Year.

***About Made in Alaska:** Implemented in 1986, the Made in Alaska program promotes products made, manufactured, and/or handcrafted in the state. The iconic mother bear and cub are an easy way for consumers to identify products manufactured in Alaska, inspiring consumer trust and helping authentic Alaska products stand out in competitive markets. The program is administered by the Division of Community and Regional Affairs.*

Housed within the Alaska State Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, the Division of Community and Regional Affairs supports Alaska's communities in building sustainable economies and a means of self-governance. For additional information about the division, please visit commerce.alaska.gov/web/DCRA.

More information about the Made in Alaska program, including a current list of permit holders, please visit madeinalaska.org.

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