



PRESS RELEASE

November 29, 2005

Slow Food promotes certified lobster consumption

The organization offers a dinner to make the product known among Mexican chefs

MEXICO CITY.- Slow Food, an international association that supports ecogastronomy, together with small and artisan producers of the food sector, and the 'El Tajín' Restaurante, carried out a dinner-sample of certified lobster from Baja California to promote the consumption of this product among Mexican chefs and restaurant operators.

"In Slow Food we are aware of the dangers that many animal and plant species are experiencing, the traditional production techniques, and the places where they are applied. This is the reason for our interest of promoting in Mexico the consumption of certified lobsters, which is very successful in other countries and is a result of sustainable practices that help us preserve our oceans", said Giorgio De'Angeli, representative of this association.

With Slow Food's message in mind, the invited Chef Ricardo Muñoz Zurita cooked three certified lobster dishes: lobster salad, lobster soup in yellow "mole" of Oaxaca, and Puerto Nuevo style lobster, which were served during the dinner-sample to a group of Slow Food members, restaurant operators, gourmets, chefs, and people interested in gastronomy.

During the event, Alicia Gironella De'Angeli and the chef Muñoz Zurita shared with all the attendants their lobster recipes, while Giorgio De'Angeli explained how the Taste Laboratories of Slow Food focus on food as a formative and knowledge based experience.

"We are proud that lobsters of our cooperatives are prepared by Mexican hands. Efforts like these help us to get our product known, and hopefully, we will have more national consumers in the near future" said Loreto Villavicencio, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Federation of Fishing Cooperatives of Baja California (FEDECOOP), Mexico, while he explained to guests the work done by fishermen and the importance of fishery for the survival of these communities.

The spiny lobster fishery of FEDECOOP obtained the certification by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) in April 2004, after approving the strict revision implemented under international criteria for sustainable and well-managed fisheries. This fact made it the first community fishery in developing countries to obtain this certification. The fishery is located between Cedros Island and Punta Abreojos in the Baja California Peninsula. FEDECOOP comprises nine fishing cooperatives with an annual capture of 1,400 tons of lobster of which, 90% is exported mainly to Asia, a small amount to France and the United States, with the remaining 10% sold locally.

The Marine Stewardship Council eco-label offers consumers the certainty that products carrying its seal proceed from well-managed fisheries that help the health of the oceans and also help in solving the crisis that fisheries are facing world wide. According to the United

Nations Organization, 60% of the primary international commercial fisheries in the international scope are either over-fished or fished to their limit.

"Overfishing is happening at such an accelerated rate that local economies and livelihoods are in danger. The market itself plays a fundamental role. Consumers may use their buying power to support practices socially responsible and friendly with the environment", said Omar Vidal, Director of WWF-Mexico, organization that collaborated with the Mexican non-government organization Comunidad y Biodiversidad (COBI), the Mexican fishery authorities, and the FEDECOOP for obtaining the MSC's certification.

Currently more than 100 buyers of marine food, including large supermarket chains from France, Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States, have committed themselves to buy products with the MSC label.

Support information for editors:

- Slow Food is a non profit association created in 1986 as a response to the homogenizing invasion of "fast food" and the frenzy of "fast life". At present, it assembles more than 100 thousand people around the world. Slow Food has been in Mexico for eight years. Mexico City was the first city in Latin America which offered a dinner, which means getting together a group of members. Slow Food restores cultural dignity of food, artisan feeding production small cattle ranch, and sustainable fishery and cattle ranch techniques. Giorgio D'Angeli is the Slow Food representative in Mexico and, together with his wife Alicia Gironella D'angeli - owners of the El Tajín Restaurante, in the Veracruz Cultural Center - promote preservation and diffusion of traditional cuisine.
- The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is an international, non government and non profit organization, created by WWF and Unilever, one of the largest fish processors in the world. Together with expert scientists from around the world, it has developed a global standard used to evaluate responsible fisheries management. www.msc.org
- Comunidad y Biodiversidad (COBI) is a non government organization which works supporting biodiversity conservation and improvement in fishing practices through community participation in the northwest of Mexico. www.cobi.org.mx
- WWF is one of the largest independent conservation organizations and with greater experience in the world. WWF was created in 1961 and is known by the Panda symbol. At present, nearly 5 million people cooperate with WWF, and it has an international network which works in more than 100 countries. www.wwf.org.mx

For more information, please contact:

Jatziri Pérez, Communications Coordinator WWF-Mexico
Tel. 52 86 56 31 Ext. 223 jperez@wwfmex.org

Slow Food México
Tel. 56 59 57 59, giorgio@avantel.net