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Omega Protein Presents: A Closer Look at Atlantic and Gulf Menhaden

HOUSTON — February 11, 2016 — Atlantic and Gulf menhaden are thriving, healthy species, and two of the best managed fisheries in the world, according to a well-sourced report released today, “*Strength in Numbers: A Closer Look at Atlantic and Gulf Menhaden.*” The analysis, produced by Omega Protein, draws from the latest menhaden assessments from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC). While examining the history of the fishery and its sustainable practices, *Strength in Numbers* takes an in-depth look at one of America’s largest and oldest fisheries.

“Both the Atlantic and Gulf menhaden fisheries are monitored and managed according to the best available science,” said Peter Himchak, Omega Protein Senior Fisheries Scientist. “Official management bodies like the ASMFC and GSMFC, as well as independent, third party organizations like [Friend of the Sea](#) and the [Sustainable Fisheries Partnership](#) have all affirmed the health of Atlantic and Gulf menhaden.”

After two failed stock assessments as a result of a broken assessment model, the ASMFC completely overhauled its methods and models for its 2015 assessment. This new assessment found that menhaden had not been overfished in decades, and that the stock was in far better shape than anyone had previously thought.

[According to the ASMFC](#), the assessment “is the latest and best information available on the status of the coastwide Atlantic menhaden stock for use in fisheries management.” In addition, the independent, scientific peer reviewers agreed. One peer reviewer, Dr. Michael Jones with Michigan State University noted, “We were very, very impressed with the thoroughness and the comprehensiveness of the stock assessment.” Describing the reviewers’ perspective, [\[Dr. Jones\] told the Bay Journal](#), “Overall, bottom line, the panel offered a strong endorsement for both the findings and the methods of the assessment.”

The most recent assessment on Gulf menhaden finds a similar record of health and sustainability. These comprehensive assessments are critical for accurately monitoring

the fisheries, guaranteeing their long-term health, and informing the sustainable rules and regulations currently in place.

“Both the [Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission] and the [Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission] conduct regular assessments of Atlantic and Gulf menhaden to evaluate the health of the stocks,” the report states. “According to the most recent assessments for both species (2015 for Atlantic menhaden and 2013 for Gulf menhaden), neither Atlantic nor Gulf menhaden are overfished, nor are they experiencing overfishing.”

The report also provides a look into the importance of Atlantic and Gulf menhaden as sources of high-quality marine ingredients. Because menhaden are a rich source of essential omega-3 fatty acids, they are playing an increasingly important role in human health through functional foods, aquaculture growth and through supplements.

Strength in Numbers shows the menhaden fisheries’ commitment to sustainability and resource management. It underlines the importance of a long-term shift to ecosystem-based management practices, showcases the success of the Atlantic and Gulf menhaden fisheries in reducing bycatch to some of the lowest levels of any fishery in the world, and highlights the fishery’s commitment to the community to ensure the sustainability of this important resource.

[View *Strength in Numbers: A Closer Look at Atlantic and Gulf Menhaden*](#)

About Omega Protein

Omega Protein Corporation (NYSE:OME) is a century-old nutritional company that develops, produces and delivers healthy products throughout the world to improve the nutritional integrity of functional foods, dietary supplements and animal feeds. Omega Protein's mission is to help people lead healthier lives with better nutrition through sustainably sourced ingredients such as highly-refined omega-3 rich fish oil, specialty proteins and nutraceuticals.