Global Changes Impact the Texas Shrimp Industry

- Changes in the global shrimp industry have created a “perfect, economic storm” that has engulfed domestic shrimp producers and processors in an unprecedented economic crisis.

- Significant increases in imports of low-priced farm-raised shrimp have pushed domestic producer prices to historic lows. As a result, shrimp producers across the Gulf and Atlantic states face a struggle for their very survival.

Extension’s Response

- In 2010, the United States Department of Agriculture again offered the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA) for those industries, including commercial fisheries, able to demonstrate reduced prices, revenues, or production levels as a result of growing imports.

- The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Sea Grant Advisory Service specialists authored the petition that gave every shrimp producer in the eight Gulf and South Atlantic states the opportunity to apply for program benefits.

- Upon regional approval, AgriLife Extension and Sea Grant specialists created an educational program for Gulf and South Atlantic shrimp producers that addressed several issues and strategies aimed at regaining a competitive position in the American marketplace dominated by farm-raised imports.

- Reference materials and teaching resources were created in English, Spanish and Vietnamese so each applicant could hear the program in their first language.

- Twenty-three Initial Orientation (IO) meetings were held for TAA approved applicants in Texas to maintain their eligibility. Agents then scheduled 26 Intensive Training (IT) meetings so approved applicants could receive their 12 hours of required training, thus qualifying them for their $12,000 cash benefits.

Economic Impact

- Over 850 Texas shrimp producers received TAA payments for the 2010-2011 season.

- Total TAA payments for Texas shrimp producers totaled $9.0 million.

- Total economic output (gross business sales) resulting from the spending of these payments was an estimated $10.8 million, which helped support more than 80 jobs.

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