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Savannah Shrimp Retest Shows Little Has Changed Despite Public Exposure of Mislabeling

Industry leaders say Georgia's new shrimp labeling law must be backed by aggressive enforcement and ongoing genetic testing

Savannah, GA – More than a year after [widespread seafood mislabeling was exposed](#) in Savannah-area restaurants showing that **77% of restaurants sampled were serving imported/farm-raised shrimp** while portraying American wild-caught was being served, new genetic retesting conducted by SeaD Consulting from May 15-16, 2026 reveals some improvement, but not enough, for consumers wanting American wild-caught shrimp.

The follow-up testing found that only **9 out of 22 shrimp dishes sampled — 41% — were confirmed to contain American wild-caught shrimp**. Meanwhile, **13 out of 22 dishes, or 59%, tested as imported/farm-raised shrimp**. Even more concerning, 12 of those 13 imported dishes were explicitly misrepresented through menu claims or verbal assurances that the shrimp were local or wild-caught.

The findings suggest that despite public attention and previous testing at area restaurants, deceptive seafood practices remain deeply entrenched in Savannah's restaurant scene.

"This retest confirms exactly why Georgia needed stronger transparency laws," said **Georgia State Representative Jesse Petrea**. "Consumers deserve honest information about the seafood they are consuming, and Georgia shrimpers deserve a fair marketplace. The passage of Georgia's shrimp labeling law through [House Bill 117](#) was

an important first step but now must be enforced in the existing food service inspection process. These findings demonstrate the importance of continued accountability and inspections moving forward at restaurants.”

The nine restaurants found to be serving American Wild-Caught Shrimp Dishes (9/22 = 41%) in the Savannah retest were:

1. Boar's Head Grill & Tavern, 1 Lincoln St, Savannah, GA 31401
2. Coastal 15, 102 W Bay St, Savannah, GA 31401
3. Fiddler's Crab House and Oyster Bar, 131 W River St, Savannah, GA 31401
4. Huey's on the River, 115 E River St, Savannah, GA 31401
5. Jackie's Seafood Market, 1117 E Montgomery Cross Rd. Savannah, GA, 31406
6. Rhett, 412 Williamson St, Savannah, GA 31401
7. Sea Wolf, 106 S Campbell Ave, Tybee Island, GA 31328
8. Sting Ray's Seafood, 1403 Butler Ave, Tybee Island, GA 31328
9. The Olde Pink House, 23 Abercorn St, Savannah, GA 31401

Six of these nine restaurants served American wild-caught shrimp during both testing periods:

1. Boar's Head Grill and Tavern
2. Coastal 15
3. Fiddler's Crab House and Oyster Bar
4. Rhett
5. Sea Wolf
6. The Olde Pink House

Three restaurants that served American wild-caught shrimp this testing period served **imported shrimp** during the last testing period.

However, **three restaurants that had previously served authentic American wild-caught shrimp** were found during the retest **to instead be serving imported farm-raised product.**

“That reversal is incredibly disappointing,” said **Blake Price, Director of the Southern Shrimp Alliance**. “It shows that restaurants known to use American wild-caught shrimp sometimes serve imports of unknown origin without proper disclosure. Accountability cannot depend on one round of testing — there has to be continued oversight if we want meaningful change. How can Georgia and its tourists support local fishermen, sustainable harvesting, and enjoy the superior flavor of U.S. wild-caught shrimp, if there isn't honest labeling?”

The retesting also revealed troubling pricing trends. **The highest-priced shrimp dish sampled in the study — costing \$38 — was an explicitly misrepresented**

imported/farm-raised shrimp dish. By comparison, the highest-priced correctly labeled American wild-caught shrimp dish cost \$32. Even the lowest-priced mislabeled dish exceeded the price of the lowest-priced American wild-caught shrimp dish.

“The fact that the most expensive shrimp dish in this entire sample size was explicitly misrepresented should outrage consumers,” said **Erin Williams, Founder and COO of SeaD Consulting**. “Dishonest restaurants are profiting off the reputation and hard work of local shrimpers without actually paying for their product. Consumers are paying premium prices believing they are supporting Georgia’s fishing heritage, when in reality many are being sold imported/farm-raised shrimp instead.”

SeaD Consulting conducted the testing using its patented [RIGHTTest™](#) rapid genetic technology, which can identify shrimp species quickly and accurately for field enforcement purposes. Industry leaders hope Georgia’s newly passed shrimp labeling requirements — combined with increased enforcement and random testing — will finally begin shifting restaurant behavior.

Under Georgia’s new law, restaurants serving imported shrimp are required to disclose that information to consumers. Shrimp industry advocates argue that the law’s success will depend heavily on regular inspections and meaningful enforcement actions against violators.

The latest findings indicate that while some restaurants responded positively to previous public scrutiny, widespread shrimp misrepresentation persists throughout Savannah’s tourism-driven seafood market.

Consumers are encouraged to ask restaurants directly about shrimp sourcing and request proof of origin whenever claims of “local,” “wild-caught,” or “Georgia shrimp” are made.

About Southern Shrimp Alliance

The Southern Shrimp Alliance (SSA) is an organization of shrimp fishermen, shrimp processors, and other members of the domestic industry in the eight warmwater shrimp-producing states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas. SSA has funded SEAD Consulting’s genetic testing at restaurants throughout their region. The list of restaurants found to be serving American wild caught shrimp in the samples taken by market can be seen [here](#).

About SeaD Consulting

SeaD (Seafood Development) Consulting works with diverse stakeholders—seafood producers, academia, governmental agencies, and environmental organizations—to foster innovation and sustainability throughout the sector, bridging commercial fishery science with testing and processing technologies to combat seafood mislabeling and

substitution. They currently hold the patent, in partnership with Florida State University, for the portable rapid ID high-accuracy genetic test RIGHTTest™, being used in a multi-state study to determine shrimp species being served at seafood restaurants. For more information about the investigation and how you can support ethical seafood sourcing, please visit www.seadconsulting.com

Disclaimer: SeaD's testing and reporting is intended to be used as an investigatory tool to assist the restaurant industry's fight against seafood mislabeling and is not intended for use in any legal proceedings, nor may SeaD's data, testing, or reporting be used in any legal proceeding without the express written authorization of SeaD.

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