



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 26, 2026

Contact:

Glenda Beasley
Media Relations
512.750.5199

[Media Kit Link](#)

For photos, B-roll, SME interviews, resources, and report information

Is That Shrimp Really Local?

In Louisiana's Capital City, Diners Still Can't Count on the Truth

Baton Rouge, LA - In the center of Louisiana government - where seafood policy is written, interpreted and enforced - diners should expect the state's clearest example of marketplace transparency. Instead, SeaD Consulting's latest follow-up genetic testing found that more than one in four sampled shrimp dishes were imported farm-raised shrimp; in most of those cases, investigators were explicitly told they were American wild-caught.

In spite of current labeling laws, follow-up genetic testing finds the capital city's misrepresentation rate rising from 21% to 27%. In April 2026 [Baton Rouge testing](#) on behalf of the Southern Shrimp Alliance, 30 of 44 dishes (68%) were American wild-caught and 9 of 44 (21%) were imported/farm-raised and explicitly misrepresented. In the latest round, 16 of 22 dishes (73%) were American wild-caught, while 6 of 22 (27%) were imported farm-raised and explicitly misrepresented. Although the share of American wild-caught shrimp increased by five percentage points, the explicit misrepresentation rate increased by six points.

In previous testing, roughly 12% of the sample dishes correctly disclosed they were selling imported/farm-raised shrimp. However, in this sample period 100% of imported/farm-raised shrimp were not labeled correctly.

Result	Previous testing	Latest testing
American wild-caught	30 of 44 (68%)	16 of 22 (73%)
Imported/farm-raised and explicitly misrepresented	9 of 44 (21%)	6 of 22 (27%)

A Disclosure Loophole That Does Not Deliver Disclosure

Louisiana law allows a restaurant serving imported shrimp to post a generalized notice stating:

“Some items served at this establishment may contain imported seafood. Ask for more information.”

But 'may contain' does not tell a diner which dish contains imported seafood, and 'ask for more information' works only if the answer is accurate. In SeaD's undercover sampling, half of the restaurants found serving imported farm-raised shrimp displayed the LDH notice, yet staff verbally represented the shrimp as American wild-caught. The other half lacked the required LDH disclosure signage.

This creates a practical loophole: a broad sign may satisfy the disclosure requirement on paper while leaving the diner without a truthful, item-specific answer. A restaurant may respond accurately when questioned by an identified regulator or official, yet give a different answer in an ordinary customer interaction. SeaD's undercover findings show why signage inspections alone cannot establish what is actually being served or represented at the table. In fact, noncompliant restaurants were consistent in falsely labeling shrimp in both test periods.



The notice currently permitted under Louisiana law: “Some items served at this establishment may contain imported seafood. Ask for more information.”

Where Is the Accountability?

A past study conducted on behalf of the Louisiana Shrimp Task Force for the state, showed that for every dollar spent on purchasing American Wild-Caught shrimp dishes, 40 cents was actually spent on misrepresented Imported/Farm-raised shrimp. This level of market share loss contributes greatly to the decline of the American Wild-Caught industry, at an estimated \$225K daily loss.

How can enforcement identify bad actors without testing the shrimp on the plate? A sign can be seen; a menu can be reviewed; an invoice can be requested. None of those steps, standing

alone, determines whether the shrimp actually served matches the representation made to the customer.

The Louisiana shrimp industry is calling for unannounced genetic testing of plated shrimp. Without verification, the current interpretation leaves consumers, honest restaurants and Louisiana shrimpers carrying the cost of lost transparency in the marketplace.

“If a restaurant indicates that the shrimp is from American fishermen, then it should not be imported or farm-raised,” said Lance Nacio, owner of Anna Marie Shrimp and Southern Shrimp Alliance Board Member. **“Louisiana has been a leader in enabling consumers to make an informed choice, but more needs to be done to ensure dollars spent on our shrimp ultimately benefit our family businesses and not dishonest suppliers.”**

Closing One Loophole: The New Commingling Law

One related loophole has already been addressed. Louisiana Representative Tim Kerner's 2026 commingling legislation, House Bill 857, requires commingled imported and domestic seafood to be treated transparently, adding penalties for processors or distributors packing or labeling imported or commingled seafood as domestic.

“We are working hard to fund testing, so we can find out where the issue is for certain in the supply chain, whether at processors, wholesalers or at restaurants in the next few months. We plan to share those results with the public and stop this deception,” said Louisiana Rep. Tim Kerner.

Testing at processors, wholesalers and restaurants can reveal where substitution or commingling enters the supply chain, while plate-level testing can determine whether the consumer ultimately received what was promised.

Two Restaurants Make the Switch to Louisiana Shrimp

The latest testing also shows that change is possible. Two restaurants (who did not want to be disclosed), were both found to be serving imported farm-raised shrimp in the previous testing period for Southern Shrimp Alliance and were confirmed in the latest round to now be serving American wild-caught shrimp. One denied ever serving foreign imports and the other could not be reached for comment, which is why further investigation by regulatory authorities is recommended when inauthenticity is found.

A restaurant owner that was consistently found to be serving authentic American wild-caught as advertised, Brad Zito of Drusilla's Seafood Restaurant, said, **“Local product tastes so much better and is consistently sweeter than the bland, rubbery taste of foreign/imported shrimp. We not only want to serve that quality product to our customers but feel it's important to support the shrimping communities in Texas, Louisiana and Alabama.”** When asked if he thought that some restaurants may be getting duped in the supply chain from the commingling of domestic and foreign product claiming to be local from processors or packing houses, he said, **“I think I can tell whether a product is local or not, but if I found out commingling was happening, I'd be really mad.”**

Restaurants Confirmed to Be Serving American Wild-Caught Shrimp

1. **Acme Oyster House (Perkins)**
3535 Perkins Rd, Baton Rouge, LA 70808
2. **Baton Rouge Poboy**
3655 O'Neal Ln #1A, Baton Rouge, LA 70816
3. **BRQ Seafood and Barbeque**
10423 Jefferson Hwy, Baton Rouge, LA 70809
4. **City Cafe**
4710 O'Neal Ln #113, Baton Rouge, LA 70817
5. **Cork's Cajun Fried Fish & Shrimp**
5131 Government St, Baton Rouge, LA 70806
6. **Crawford's Restaurant**
1980 Staring Ln, Baton Rouge, LA 70810
7. **Doe's Eat Place**
3723 Government St, Baton Rouge, LA 70806
8. **Drusilla Seafood Restaurant**
3482 Drusilla Ln D, Baton Rouge, LA 70809
9. **Frank's Restaurant**
8353 Airline Hwy, Baton Rouge, LA 70815
10. **Jack's Seafood**
5467 Plank Rd, Baton Rouge, LA 70805
11. **Mike Anderson's**
1031 W Lee Dr, Baton Rouge, LA 70820
12. **Parrain's Seafood**
3225 Perkins Rd, Baton Rouge, LA 70808
13. **SoLou**
2112 Perkins Palm Ave, Baton Rouge, LA 70808
14. **Tony's Seafood Market & Deli**
5215 Plank Rd, Baton Rouge, LA 70805
15. (One restaurant that was previously found to be mislabeling but is currently authentic did not want to be listed).
16. (A second restaurant that was previously found to be mislabeling but is currently authentic did not want to be listed).

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 the region.

About SeaD Consulting

SeaD (Seafood Development) Consulting works with seafood producers, academia, governmental agencies and environmental organizations to foster innovation and sustainability throughout the

sector. SeaD holds the patent, in partnership with Florida State University, for the portable Rapid ID Genetic High-Accuracy Test, RIGHTTest™, used in a multi-state study to determine shrimp species served at seafood restaurants. For more information, 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 legal proceedings, nor may SeaD's data, testing or reporting be used in any legal proceeding without the express written authorization of SeaD.

###