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Gulf Shores Restaurants Undergo Genetic Retesting Revealing Shrimp Sourcing Changes

New Testing Shows Continued Mislabeling Despite Progress; Two Restaurant Chains Switch to Domestic Wild-Caught Shrimp

Gulf Shores, AL – October 21, 2025 – A follow-up investigation conducted by SeaD Consulting using its RIGHTTest™ (Rapid ID Genetic High-Accuracy Test) has revealed new insights into shrimp sourcing integrity at Gulf Shores-area restaurants. The retesting, part of an ongoing regional study supported by the Southern Shrimp Alliance, found both encouraging signs of progress and persistent misrepresentation in the labeling and sourcing of shrimp served to local diners.

Fifty percent of restaurants from SeaD's initial March 2025 Gulf Shores testing were randomly selected for follow-up. Of the 22 restaurants retested in October 2025, findings show that:

- 10 out of 22 were serving imports (46%) vs [19 out of 44 \(43%\)](#) previously tested in March 2025.
- 3 restaurants that previously served authentic American wild-caught shrimp are now serving non-domestic shrimp. The findings will be shared with the Alabama Department of Health.
- 2 restaurants that had previously been identified as serving non-domestic shrimp are now verified to be serving wild-caught domestic shrimp. As those new restaurants have multiple locations, the switch to domestic is significant economically.

Despite some improvement, the majority of establishments serving imported shrimp continued to market their products as local or wild-caught, highlighting gaps in oversight and enforcement of Alabama's seafood labeling laws.

“While mislabeling or substitution can occur at any point in the supply chain, it is ultimately the consumer who is misled—and that is unacceptable,” said **Blake Price, Deputy Director of the Southern Shrimp Alliance (SSA)**. “SeaD’s genetic testing shows a concerning lack of accountability in seafood sourcing that removes consumer choice. Meanwhile, American shrimpers continue to watch their market disappear to falsely advertised imported shrimp, the majority of which is farm-raised in countries known to use forced labor, banned antibiotics, and environmental shortcuts. Thankfully, Alabama passed a law to help consumers find premium U.S. wild-caught shrimp.”

The Alabama Seafood Labeling Law went into effect October 1, 2024 and requires food establishments and retailers to clearly label their seafood products. It is currently enforced by the Alabama Department of Public Health.

Alabama Representative Chip Brown says, “Restaurants need to do a better job of following the law and being accountable to their customers. If you look at what just happened at the National Shrimp Festival in Gulf Shores, the organizers literally put a Chief Shrimp Investigator at the event and hired SeaD for testing to achieve compliance for authenticity. So, there is a solution out there and its enforcement to bring in compliance.”

Restaurants in the Sample Found to Be Authentically Serving Wild-Caught American Shrimp (as of October 12-14, 2025 Retesting)

1. **Acme Oyster House**— 216 E 24th Ave, Gulf Shores, AL 36542
2. **Blalock Seafood** – 1911 Gulf Shores Pkwy, Gulf Shores, AL 36542
3. **De Soto’s Seafood Kitchen** – 138 W 1st Ave, Gulf Shores, AL 36542
4. **Fish River Grill #3** – 1545 Gulf Shores Pkwy, Gulf Shores, AL 36542
5. **Fresh Market Seafood** – 15849 AL-180, Gulf Shores, AL 36542
6. **Gulf Bowl & Captain’s Choice** – 2881 S Juniper St, Foley, AL 36535
7. **Lartigue Seafood** – 23043 Perdido Beach Blvd, Gulf Shores, AL 36561
8. **Lulu’s Gulf Shores** – 200 E 25th Ave, Gulf Shores, AL 36542
9. **Moe’s Original BBQ** – 25603 Perdido Beach Blvd, Orange Beach, AL 36561
10. **Picnic Beach Bar & Grill** – 128 E 1st Ave, Gulf Shores, AL 36542
11. **Shrimp Basket** – 301 AL-59, Gulf Shores, AL 36542
12. **Tacky Jack’s** – 240 E 24th Ave, Gulf Shores, AL 36542

Two Gulf Shores establishments that previously served imported shrimp—Tacky Jack’s Gulf Shores and Shrimp Basket—have transitioned to domestic wild-caught shrimp since the March 2025 testing. Tacky Jack’s has 3 locations in Alabama, and the Shrimp Basket chain operates 18 locations across Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida.

Melissa Elders, Vice President of Marketing for Artistry, parent company of Shrimp Basket Restaurants, added: “Artistry acquired Shrimp Basket in 2020 and at that time we maintained

the use of imported shrimp as a cost-savings decision for our guests. When we learned how important it was to buy local—through the genetic testing work SeaD conducts and the media covering the story—we were encouraged and inspired to offer an upgrade to Gulf wild-caught shrimp on the menu. We know this change is not only significant to help our coastal communities, but our diners feel it's important as well. This is part of our Gulf to Guest commitment at Shrimp Basket.”

Despite progress, 9 out of 10 of the restaurants, not only implying, but outright claiming to serve domestic shrimp were actually found to serve imported, farm-raised shrimp. One establishment admitted that staff are instructed to “say it’s Gulf when it’s from Peru,” revealing the depth of misinformation passed to consumers.

“Alabama has state labeling laws meant to protect consumers and support domestic fisheries, but these results show that enforcement remains weak,” said Dave Williams, Cofounder and Commercial Fishery Scientist at SeaD Consulting. “Without consistent transparency, both diners and honest shrimpers lose.”

About the Southern Shrimp Alliance

The Southern Shrimp Alliance (SSA) represents shrimp fishermen, processors, and businesses in the eight warmwater shrimp-producing states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas. SSA funds multi-state investigations into seafood mislabeling to protect the domestic shrimp industry and consumers. See this SSA Facebook link to share to your followers: [Southern Shrimp Alliance Facebook](#).

About SeaD Consulting

SeaD Consulting collaborates with seafood producers, researchers, governments, and environmental advocates to promote sustainability and truth in seafood sourcing. SeaD holds the patent for the RIGHTTest™ (Rapid ID Genetic High-Accuracy Test) and leads landmark studies across the Gulf and beyond.

For more on the investigation, photos, B-roll, SME interviews, contact Glenda Beasley at 512.750.5199.

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.*

#KnowYourShrimp #SeaDConsulting #SouthernShrimpAlliance
