



On-board processing and packaging innovation in the Australian wild harvest prawn fishery

The challenge

The wild prawn industry currently catches over 20,000 tonnes of wild prawns valued at over \$300 million per year. This includes higher value exports of 7,000 tonnes valued at \$144million. The industry has identified stages where product waste occurs during on-board processing of prawns and is keen to capitalise on the increased value that could be achieved through eliminating it.

However the industry has identified, but never been able to quantify the % change, in industry value that would be achieved through intervening at points of product waste.

Our plan

This project will benchmark prawn loss volumes and identify intervention activities through targeted supply-chain analysis with stakeholders throughout the Australian prawn supply chain (on-board operators, transport and storage operators, food distributors/retailers).

This project identifies and aims to implement food waste reduction throughout the prawn supply chain, on board, during transport, storage and at retail/food service through interventions such as processing, packaging and traceability.

“This project is a great example of how a collaborative approach can assist industry to reduce waste and add value to the Australian prawn industry.”



FIGHT FOOD WASTE
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Australian Government
Department of Industry,
Innovation and Science

Business
Cooperative Research
Centres Program

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It will also generate solutions that provide:

- the ability to efficiently and optimally process larger volumes of prawns under periods of high-volume catch
- on-board processing automation (such as peeling) to enhance product value thus increasing profitability
- the ability to supply a premium grade product as a result of faster processing times
- the ability to reduce crew fatigue due to increased automation and adoption of new technology
- new on-board preservation techniques that will improve shelf-life, increase market access and reduce discard in supermarkets/retail
- a potential price premium for the frozen high-quality product if on-board freezing capacity is introduced to vessels currently supplying fresh only product

- the introduction of new on-board packaging formats and automation technologies that can reduce the waste associated with larger volume packaging, reduce on-board labour costs and worker risk, and reduce the need for land-based re-packaging.

Australian Council of Prawn Fisheries members will benefit from a summary of the current status on Australian vessels, consumer preferences, and the latest technologies.

Timeline

July 2019 - March 2022

Project leader

Dr Janet Howieson, Curtin University

Participants



Queensland
Government



Curtin University

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