

December 2 - 3, 2020

BAYFIELD FOODS CSA

Community Supported Agriculture



COMMENTS? QUESTIONS?

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THE BODIN FAMILY OF BODIN FISHERIES

The holiday season & Herring season are here!

What do you think of when you hear the word “Herring”? Does it conjure up an image of a tasty white fillet of fish, or do you think about the jars of pickled Herring your grandparents used to have on the table at the holidays? Herring means many different things to people around Lake Superior because of our deep roots and traditions, but in Bayfield this time of year, it means WORK! A lot of people doing a lot of work.

I would estimate that there are a dozen commercial fishing tugs out plying the waters of the Apostle Islands this month in search of Herring. Each boat has a crew of 4 to 9 people working 7 days a week, weather permitting. Leaving before sunrise each day, and not returning until the sun’s shadows are long, or by the lights of the harbor as their guide, each boat may catch between 2 – 10,000 pounds of fish per day. These boxes of fish are stacked on pallets or dumped into totes for transfer into one of several processing facilities, where workers in bright orange bibs do the dirty work of dressing the fish. Many additional hands are hired to help



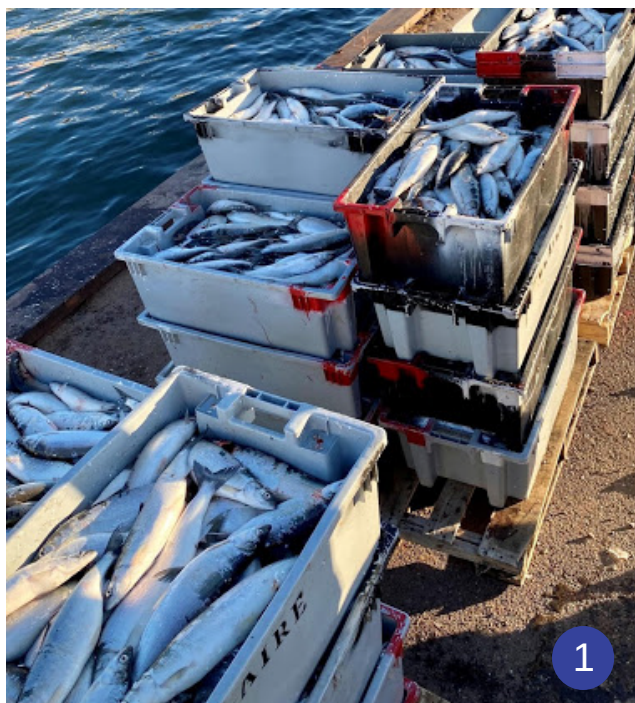
with all of this work during the season. Refrigerated semi-trailers are parked on the streets by the fish houses around the Bayfield peninsula waiting for the loads to haul to the markets.

Lake Herring, sometimes referred to as Cisco, is the only species of Lake Superior fish that are allowed to be harvested while they are full of spawn or in the process of spawning. The Department of Natural Resources has strict quotas to protect them from over-fishing, but the spawn, or roe, is one of the reasons for the harvest. This roe is collected and further processed into caviar and shipped over to several Scandinavian countries where it has become a replacement for more expensive varieties of caviar. Fresh fillets are cut from the larger, more firm fish, made ready for your Friday night fish fry or for pick up at a retail outlet in the region. Most of the remaining fish are packaged in bulk containers for mincing into Gefilte Fish, frozen for smoking at a later date, and some will end up as pet food. Scraps and waste end up in fish emulsion fertilizer or composting. Being good stewards of our natural resources has always been an important part of Bodin Fisheries.

You may purchase some Herring from Bayfield Foods in your next order cycle. Consider trying some of this "Lake Superior Gold" caviar, or a 2# package of fresh pin boned fillets. Who wants to try some Smoked Herring? Thank you to those of you that have purchased these fillets recently from Bayfield Foods.

While the pandemic has impacted some crews and facilities this year, the precautionary mask wearing in our processing facility has the added benefit of keeping our faces cleaner, a little warmer and a lot less odorous!

-Bill Bodin



Herring season at Bodin Fisheries
(top - bottom):

1. A productive day on the lake; the herring harvest on the Lake Superior dock.
2. Fresh herring fillets.
3. The end result! Enjoying a fresh-caught Friday fish fry.