



PROJECT PROFILE

THIS FISH

FROM PACIFIC TO PLATE: Groundbreaking digital platform connects consumers to their seafood - and the people who bring it to them.

New food traceability standards imposed by the European Union in 2009 initially looked like an expensive - and possibly fatal - blow to small, independent fishing fleets and processors on Vancouver Island. It was some of those very fishermen - including the West Coast Area G Trollers Association - who took the lead on creating ThisFish with EcoTrust Canada. Early funding from ICET helped the innovative technological solution become a key marketing tool, and the technology and systems behind it are being recognized around the world as an award-winning technology platform and start-up. ThisFish is a web-based tool that tags every fish caught with a unique, traceable code. Consumers can enter the code in the ThisFish.info website

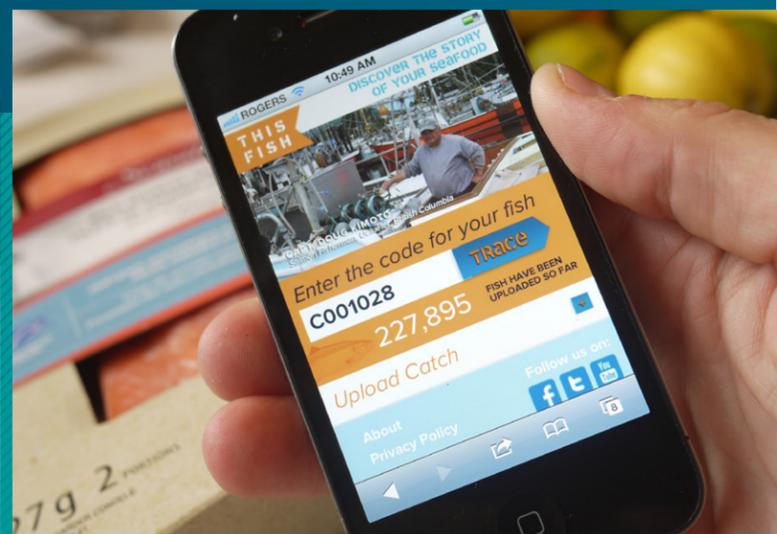
and learn all about the fish, the fisher, how and where it was harvested, where it was processed, and more. Increased consumer demand for sustainably-sourced food posed a challenge for the industry, as proving provenance for fish isn't easy - or cheap. Small BC fishing fleets and fisheries were most at risk, as changes to meet the new regulations were prohibitively expensive. However, the creation of ThisFish provided them with a shared resource designed to meet the needs of consumers and advocates. "Once lingcod began to be traced through ThisFish, Ocean Wise lifted its ban and lingcod soon began showing up in Ocean Wise restaurants," explained Eric Enno Tamm, General Manager of ThisFish. "The immediate impact was to raise the value

of lingcod by one dollar per pound for fish harvesters." ThisFish branding and tagged fish are available in retailers across the country, ranging from small specialty fish shops to national chains like Sobeys. The products are also sold across the U.S., and into Europe. Top seafood restaurants were early adopters, and the growth in that market continues. The system is easy to use. A code, which appears on tagged fish packaging, is entered into the ThisFish website which then displays photos, biography, and personal messages from the fisherman - connecting consumers to the story of their harvester and providing them with compelling information about their food.

Albion Farms and Fisheries partnered with This Fish in 2010, starting with tail and gill-tagging. "Trust and safety is a vital part of our operation as a meat and seafood provider, so it is important for us to bring customers closer to the source of their food," said Guy Dean, Vice-President and Chief Sustainability Officer of Albion Farms & Fisheries. "A traceability platform allows us to support sustainable harvesting practices while playing a leading role in the transparency of supply-chain participants." It's that use of technology to connect consumer to product that sets this story apart. More than 750 fishing vessels are part of the ThisFish network, with more than 20 processors across Canada. "ThisFish continues to grow as an internationally recognized tech start-up," Tamm explained. "But unlike many other

tech companies that go through a 'pivot-or-persevere' phase, our original vision and mission remain true." ThisFish has a vision to see traceability around the globe, and over the years have expanded their operations into Atlantic Canada, to Southeast Asian tuna fisheries, into South America and more. As the program expanded, the prevalence of paper-tracking among food producers presented a challenge to scaling the initiative globally. In response, ThisFish created a new software platform called 'Tally' enabling seafood producers to digitize their operations. Since its launch in 2016, Tally has been installed in processing plants in Belize, Thailand, Indonesia and on hundreds of fishing vessels around the world, allowing for wider integration of seafood traceability.

Not showing signs of slowing anytime soon, Ecotrust Canada incorporated ThisFish into a for-profit company, to facilitate the investments required to pursue its vision as the world's most trusted seafood traceability platform. Evidence of the success of that decision can be found in ThisFish being named a top start-up of 2018 by Rocket Builders, and winning the Global Startup Competition in 2017. As ThisFish continues to grow and evolve, that initial \$49,668 investment from ICET is paying dividends to every part of the supply chain, as the fishing industry around Vancouver Island taps into a technology-driven marketing tool that introduces their product to the world.



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