



April 30th, 2020

Marine Eco-Label Japan (MEL) Council

MEL NEWS VOL. 25 (ENGLISH EDITION)

Dear Our Readers:

MEL NEWS has been issued for 24 numbers since April 2018. From this month, we newly issue the English edition. It is aimed at creating a place where overseas partners and customers know more about MEL's efforts, actions and activities. It would be great if this version can be served for communicating among us as well.

1. MEL Certification Updates

Three certifications (1 fishery, 1 aquaculture and 1 CoC) were issued in this month. Thus, the total number of certifications is 47 (3 fishery, 22 aquaculture and 22 CoC). We are currently working on new application program and supporting certified entities.

2. Topics

Ito-Yokado Co., Ltd., one of the major Japanese retailers, was certified under MEL CoC as the first in the retail industry. It started launching fresh fillet and sashimi block with MEL V-2 logo on April 13th. This is a joint program between "Fresh Foods with Traceability" of Ito-Yokado Co., Ltd., and MEL. Certified species and supply partners are: Yellowtail from Shozuya Marine Products, Ambarjack from Kanoya Fishery Cooperatives, Red Snapper from Shigeyoshi Marine Products and Flounder from Marutoshi Marine Products. We are excited at its appealing display and presentation, and hope the program gets more consumers' awareness.

The right article is Ito-Yokado's press release issued on April 10th that it gained MEL certification and launched four species with MEL V-2 Eco label. It features four suppliers' profile in detail, too.

NEWS RELEASE

セブン&アイ HLDGS.
株式会社 イトーヨーカ堂

日本の大手小売業初！ GREEN CHALLENGE 2050 環境負荷低減目標 V2 2020年4月10日

**まず『顔が見えるお魚。』4魚種にマークを付与し販売
水産エコラベル『MEL 認証』を取得！**

2020年4月13日（月）より全国のイトーヨーカドーで販売開始

株式会社イトーヨーカ堂（本社：東京都千代田区、代表取締役社長：三枝 富博）は、日本の大手小売業として初めて、環境に配慮し漁獲・養殖された水産物の認証制度である『MEL 認証』を取得いたしました。これにより、まずはオリジナルブランド商品『顔が見えるお魚。』の“ぶり”“かんぱち”“真鯛”“平目”の合計4魚種に「MEL マーク」を付与し、2020年4月13日から全国155店舗のイトーヨーカドーで販売いたします。

『MEL 認証』とは、日本の水産物の多様性を反映し、国際標準に準拠した「日本発 世界が認める水産エコラベル」で、マリン・エコラベル・ジャパン協議会によって運営されています。漁業者・養殖業者は持続可能な漁業・養殖業を認証する「漁業認証」、「養殖認証」を、また、流通・加工・小売業者は「流通加工段階認証」を取得することで、環境に配慮して漁獲・養殖された水産物を確保にお客様にお届けする仕組みになっています。

今回、当社はオリジナルブランド商品『顔が見えるお魚。』シリーズの生産者の皆様とともに『MEL 認証』取得に取り組み、2020年3月24日に『MEL 流通段階認証 Ver.2.0』を取得いたしました。持続可能性に配慮して生産された水産物に認証ラベルを付けて流通させることで、生産現場から食卓までのトレーサビリティを確保するとともに、消費者の皆様が責任ある養殖業で生産された水産物を選択できるよう支援し、自然環境の保全と地域の人々の暮らしを両立させることを目指しています。

Source: Ito-Yokado's New Release, 4/10/2020



Left: Seafood Counter at Kiba Branch of Ito-Yokado with POP of MEL V-2 Certification

Right: Fresh Fillet Pack of Yellowtail with MEL V-2 Logo

3. Voice from Certified Entity

We would like to share what is going on with certification holders. Mr. Rikio Sato, an advisor of Waguura branch of Toba Isobe Fisheries Cooperative Association in Mie Prefecture, talks about a topic of seaweed program.

“Effectiveness of MEL”

Supposed there is a country where people can drive a car without a driver license. What motivation do you think that people want to enter MEL Driving School to get the license in even such situation? Perhaps, let's say, the graduation label on taxi's body gives a sense of security to customers, which helps increase the number of them, and then raise your income as a taxi driver. To be honest, no matter how much advocating the good concept of “Eco”, for fishermen like us, effectiveness of MEL is just for price increase...

But having said that, I felt a little nerves to watch the first auction for MEL Salted Seaweed. Maybe, because of celebration, our price is JPY2,300 (USD 20) per KG, JPY1,000 (USD 8) higher

than Non-Eco-labeled one. Since then, the price has been maintaining steady despite COVID-19's negative circumstance, which I feel relieved. However, I would say that it is not affected by MEL because we are only one MEL-certificated seaweed processor, nor by consumers' demand because some of MEL-labeled retail products have just started being sold there. I think the real challenge for us is two or three years later. Anyhow, it was a good start of MEL's first year.

Wrote by Rikio Sato



Left: Processing Plant with Billboard of "Waguura Town of Seaweed and Spanish Mackerel"



Right: POP Featuring MEL V-2 Logo

4. Topic for Tomorrow

This new column - Topic for Tomorrow - starts from this number to share related people's messages with readers, which is expected to give us beneficial suggestions from various perspectives. Prof. Hiroyuki Matsuda at Yokohama National University, a chairman of MEL Advisory Board, wrote the following post as the first columnist:

"Achievement of Old MEL and Expectation for MEL V-2"

The MEL V-2 scheme was recognized by GSSI in December 2019. I believe, it was a big step from not only GSSI's, but also diversification of world marine eco-label standpoint. Mr. Koji Terashima, a vice chairman of Japan Society of Ocean Policies, gave us an impressive comment during the MEL workshop held on December 13th, 2019. He told, "MEL's program is a good example for other marine policies, which made us feel motivated for sure". The old MEL will be abolished by the end of January 2021, and the MEL logo will be returned to the original around the time of postponed Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic 2020.



Prof. Hiroyuki Matsuda

As GSSI' Independent Expert pointed out during the workshop held on February 6th, 2019, the concept of marine eco-label is always innovating. Many entities certified under the old MEL and this could be a trigger to develop the global marine certificate originated from Japan today. I believe, MEL is not just eco-label, but can serve to provide learning opportunities for those who have high ambition in the fishery industry. It is not the only way to register the new MEL. I highly

expect that MEL in collaboration with GSSSI can provide some tips to achieve sustainable fishery in Asia and the world.

We will overcome this hardship of COVID-19 that everybody in the world suffers from. Appreciated your continuous support and cooperation for MEL!

Wrote by Prof. Hiroyuki Matsuda

5. MEL's Bulletin Board

Minoru Tamura, a technical manager of MEL Council, will go back to Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) at the end of May 2020. He appreciates wonderful supports from many people. Hisanori Kanno will join MEL and take over from Minoru.

POSTSCRIPT

We are very excited at the launch of MEL-labeled seafood products at Ito-Yokado. If you have a chance, please visit their store and stop by the seafood section, you would be impressed by the fresh and lively presentation! We pick up two topics: Voice from Mr. Rikio Sato, and Column from Prof. Hiroyuki Matsuda; both comments give us insight related to MEL's direction and challenges now and in the future.

Hope coronavirus epidemic slows down in your country, and your life gets back to the normal as soon as possible. Please stay safe!

If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact MEL Council Secretariat; we are happy to hear that.

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