



Date 3/6/26

Re: March Market Update – *Portunus pelagicus* and *Monomia haanii*

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### **Blue Swimming Crab / *Portunus pelagicus* (SE Asia)**

Demand for blue crab has been steady at both retail and in foodservice. Despite persistent inflation challenges, crab consumers continue to indulge in this specialty seafood option. Restaurant demand has been somewhat hindered by unusually cold and snowy weather in much of the core crab markets.

Overseas, demand is extremely high in Indonesia, outpacing supply. Now in-season, the fishery is experiencing decent catch rates but the advent of new packers, all vying for crabs to process, has furthered the challenge for those already producing. High demand across more packers means higher prices to secure crabs to produce. All other blue fisheries are currently off-line, with India, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Mexico and Tunisia all out of season. All the pressure is on Indonesia to support blue crab demand. From a resource standpoint, the crabs are running smaller than normal, making premium grades tighter – Colossal, Jumbo Lump, Super Lump all impacted. All of this equates to tight supplies and high/higher prices.

### **Red Swimming Crab / *Monomia haanii* (Vietnam, China)**

Vietnam has transitioned from TET and fishermen are heading out to fish once again. The success of these initial trips will provide some insight as to the potential of the early Vietnamese season. If successful, we might expect new season containers to start arriving in May/June. Until then, red crab availability remains limited with firm prices.

China remains in low season and will go into full conservation in mid-May. We would expect China to push hard to ship prior to conservation, but any product being shipped out of China between now and then would be last year's production and/or previously frozen.



## MMPA (Marine Mammal Protection Act) Update

Both the Indonesian and Vietnamese fisheries are in review right now by NOAA. During this period, all new documentation will be reviewed and considered for a ruling to be made anytime between now and May 19<sup>th</sup>. Until that point, both fisheries can continue to export into the United States without restriction.

Venezuela, a major fishery for fresh and pasteurized blue crab, did not meet NOAA's original deadlines for filing required documentation. As such, they are currently banned from exporting into the United States. However, In February Venezuela initiated the process for reconsideration. Right now it is unclear how NOAA will handle this filing or how quickly it will respond. Should Venezuela remain banned, it will have a profound impact on demand for alternative pasteurized red and blue crab options, particularly in certain high demand 'fresh' markets.

## Supply Chain Update

Diesel pricing has increased 28% over the past 30 days, now averaging \$4.66/gallon. The hostilities in Iran are dramatically impacting fuel prices and could continue to drive freight costs up considerably. Inability to pass through the Strait of Hormuz has temporarily halted the flow of Middle East oil. Prices have risen more than \$0.88/gallon in the last week alone. We also expect greater lane and port congestion as ships re-route to avoid risky and dangerous areas. This is likely to increase container delays for the foreseeable future.

### COMPARE STATES

Location National California

Gas Reg Mid Prem **Diesel**

