

## CONSULTANT AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES HELP SEAFOOD STARTUP COMPANY SAFELY FIND ITS WAY TO RETAIL STORES

**ABOUT HARMONY FRESH SEAFOODS.** Headquartered in the Skagit County town of La Conner, Harmony Fresh Seafoods is a startup company focusing on fresh salmon products, including salmon spread, candied salmon, and smoked salmon. Harmony Fresh is USDA-certified and starting a facility in which to manufacture its products.

**THE CHALLENGE.** In addition to its USDA certification, Harmony Fresh Seafoods also needed a Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) certification to obtain the ability to move into the Ready To Eat distribution model that allows for retail distribution of products. Harmony Fresh Seafoods connected with Impact Washington, part of the MEP National Network™, for help achieving this certification.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** Impact Washington initiated a rigorous and credible training program—known as the Safe Quality Food (SQF) program—with Harmony Fresh Seafoods. The Safe Quality Food program is designed to meet industry, customer, and regulatory requirements for all sectors of the food supply chain, from the farm all the way to the retail stores. The rigorous farm-to-fork certification also helps food producers assure their buyers that their products meet the highest possible global food safety standards.

Combined, three Harmony Fresh employees spent nearly 200 hours of Safe Quality Food-preparedness training. That training included technical training on best manufacturing practices, standard operating procedures, sanitation, environmental monitoring, supply chain, system documentation, important auditing practices, documentation procedures, supplier verification and numerous food-safety procedures. In October 2022, Harmony Fresh Seafoods became Safe Quality Food (SQF) Certified and is in the process of onboarding retail customers that require compliance and certification under the Global Food Safety Initiative. Those retail customers include Albertson's, QFC/Kroger, Amazon Go, Hagen, and others—all of which require compliance for the ready-to-eat products.

"Working with Impact Washington has been one of the best things we as a company could have done. We walked into this industry thinking we were ready without realizing how quickly we would be out of our depth. (Impact Washington) was able to help narrow in on what resources (it) had available for our company to achieve the highest benefit. We were able to obtain a consultant who helped us establish everything a company needs to get started. Some things we knew and had an idea of some things we knew but how no idea how to accomplish, and some things we'd never considered. We were able to have our small team trained in everything needed to really get things going. We are on track to hit shelves this year. Without this program, we would have been dead in the water months ago. Any product sales we ever make will be due to Impact Washington. We truly would not be here today without the support Impact Washington has provided."

-Kayle Kutsch, Operations Director and Quality Control Officer

## RESULTS



\$300,000 in new or retained sales



\$49,000 in cost savings



Safe Quality Food (SQF) Certification



New customers that require compliance and certification under the Global Food Safety Initiative.

## CONTACT US



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