Top 25: Seafood Product Innovation

By Madelyn Keams
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Acme Smoked Fish Corp. | Blue Hill Bay Smoked Fish Poke Bowls
Brooklyn, New York-based supplier Acme Smoked Fish Corp. is always on the lookout for new ways and places to introduce smoked fish to consumers.

It was this quest that led the company to create, in 2018, its Blue Hill Bay Smoked Fish Poke Bowls line, which comes in two varieties: smoked salmon and smoked ahi tuna. The bowls were invented to convince a new type of consumer to try smoked fish, Adam Caslow, co-CEO of Acme, told SeafoodSource back in May 2018.

“I look at it as a different introduction into the category for people unfamiliar with smoked fish. Rice bowls are more approachable for some people, and smoked fish allows the bowls to have a longer shelf-life,” Caslow said. “The category has been around for decades, but there hasn’t been a ton of innovation. And, while there are meal kits and ready-to-eat bowls, those do not include smoked fish.”

The microwaveable bowls, which include cooked rice, smoked fish, Acme’s signature poke sauce, and a seasoning packet, appeal to trends in consumption, Caslow added.

“People are consuming food differently now,” he said. “They are responding favorably to these composed dishes that can be thrown in the bag and brought to work and school. I think of it when I want a complete meal on the go.”

If you ask Acme’s Ellen Lee-Allen, this consumer inclination identified in 2018 continues to hold true today, and has informed the company’s approach to its newer innovations.

“We have this new product that we’re introducing right now, Smoked Salmon Candy, and it’s kind of trending on how consumers look for convenience and they want something nutritious and healthy instead of the usual junk food,” she said.

With the Smoked Salmon Candy, “We’re looking at another location where people will be open to eating smoked fish,” Lee-Allen added, noting that the product works well as a snack or atop a salad.

When asked about Acme’s approach to product innovation, Lee-Allen emphasized the company’s keen eye for noticing hot topics.

“We look at culinary trends, what’s hot, what people are gravitating towards. We also look at consumer desires,” she said.

Regardless of the consumer trends an Acme offering is tailored to, the company always remains firm in its stance on quality and taste.

“Our commitment to quality and taste is something we never compromise on,” Lee-Allen said.

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