Project Proposal to the Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association (BBRSDA)

Submitted by:

Nakeen Homepack, LLC
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I, Amanda Wlaysewski, hereby acknowledge having read the BBRSDA Five-Year Strategic Plan and bylaws.

Nakeen Homepack, LLC, a small custom processing business in Bristol Bay, was established in 2012 and has since seen two seasons of successful operation. The business primarily functions to provide DEC-approved processing and packaging services to Bristol Bay fishermen who independently market a portion of their commercial catch. In 2013, from both returning and new boats, the pounds we processed more than tripled from that of the first season; keeping our facility operating at maximum capacity and employing three more local residents than expected. The men and women whose fish we process are the face of industry to many domestic markets across the country. As they work to introduce and heighten the national profile of Bristol Bay salmon it is more important than ever to ensure that they deliver the highest quality product possible. To achieve this, Nakeen Homepack is seeking funding from the BBRSDA to support a lateral expansion of our processing operations.

Major components of the following strategic objectives will be addressed by this project:
Strategy #1- Improve Quality and Value.
Strategy #3 Marketing and Promotion
Strategy #4 Maintain Sustainability of the Fishery.

Project Proposal:
This project seeks funding to obtain and integrate upgrades in processing equipment that are greatly needed to improve upon production efficiency and increase the ability to provide high quality processing services of value-added salmon products for direct marketers in Bristol Bay. Over two years, funds from the BBRSDA would be used for the purchase and associated costs of incorporating a higher capacity vacuum packaging machine, a fillet machine and a pin-bone remover. These upgrades would not only increase the number of fishermen we could provide services to, but in addition, would ensure the integrity of the delivered product and create increases in revenue as sellers gain access to higher value markets.
Because we work closely with both fishermen and the resource, Nakeen Homepack is uniquely positioned to observe, document, track and understand more about differences in chilling and handling practices as well as new product development and successful marketing, distribution and promotional strategies. In turn, we have evolved into a resource that educates and connects direct marketers to each other as well as to the greater industry. These benefits and opportunities to promote Bristol Bay salmon are entirely dependent upon a consistent, premium-grade product. Given this reinforcement, Nakeen Homepack could realize our full potential as an asset to the Bristol Bay fishermen and women in their efforts to carry out viable direct marketing endeavors and strengthen the sustainability of our fishery at large.

Total Project Cost (as per consultations with Marel-Carnitech, Alaska Sea Grant/MAP, and Kodiak Wild Source): **$160,000**
Equipment:**$130,000**
Associated Costs (freight, install, technical assistance, production tracking and analysis) **$30,000**
Seeking from BBRSDA: Year one: $50,000. Year two: $70,000. Total: $120,000.

Additional funding source: personal capital, Alaska Rural Development Initiative Loan

Approximate date of project completion: June 2015