

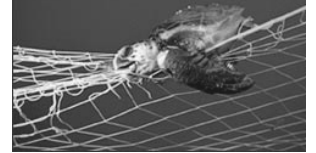
SIMPLE LIFESTYLE

CONSUMER TIPS, No. 4, July 2007

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FINDING GREEN SHRIMP AND PRAWNS

Shrimp is now America's #1 consumer seafood choice, but it's largely a luxury item for the world's rich, harvested at the expense of the poor and the environment. Most of our shrimp comes from coastal farms in Asia or Latin America, where it has devastated an estimated 38% of the world's remaining mangrove forests, ruined local fish nurseries and protein food resources, and left behind polluted pools, all for a product that is wholly exported (and shipped to us). Wild shrimp isn't much better, as trawling has decimated sea-turtle populations and rakes up to 15 pounds of "bycatch" (unwanted fish that are tossed dead overboard) per pound of shrimp. But there is now hope for shrimp-lovers. There are several organic domestic (US) shrimp farms, plus Alaskan Spot Prawns are trap-caught with little bycatch. In Davis, Safeway, Albertson's, and even the Davis Food Co-op can't help you, but Nugget can if you ask. Look for Ocean Boy Farms products. Or you can order directly from www.oceanboymfarms.com, www.permianseashrimp.com, or www.ecofish.com.



Sea turtle caught as bycatch

COFFEE REPRIS: SOME SOLUTIONS

Shade-grown coffee is relatively easy to find, but you can also order fair-trade shade-grown coffee from Costa Rica via www.cafebritt.com (which Lorell Hardaker says is excellent). Another option is www.puravidacoffee.com, which also supports local poverty-reduction programs. Lorell reports that the company was started by two Christian friends, one who was doing mission work and one from the US business world.

T-SHIRTS AND OTHER THINGS YOU WEAR

Go into your closet and check the tags on your clothes. You may find they originated in over 20 different nations, most of them impoverished. Textile manufacturing is a double-edged sword. It has been a primary engine of economic growth. It initiated the Industrial Revolution in the UK and the US 200+ years ago. It still does the same in places like Bangladesh, China, and Honduras. It offers relatively high-paying jobs, primarily for single women. It leads to greater independence and economic clout for women, often freeing them from gender-based oppression in the villages. Marriage age increases, birth rates decline, and greater wealth flows to the poor. At the same time, the industry is notorious for its sweatshop stories, ranging from poor working conditions and lack of workers' rights to international slavery in the case of North Korean women housed in Czech factories today. Economists on the left and right agree that textile manufacturing should be supported, partnered with activist campaigns to abolish sweatshop conditions. I personally avoid "Made in China", as China gains unfair market share through nefarious means (see Consumer Tips No. 2) and is fueled by oil from Sudan. For more background, see *The Travels of a T-shirt in the Global Economy* by Pietra Rivoli and *The End of Poverty* by Jeffrey Sachs. For information on campaigns regarding working conditions, see <http://www.coopamerica.org/programs/sweatshops/>

COVENANT DENOMINATION PASSES CREATION CARE RESOLUTION

The Covenant Annual Meeting just passed a resolution advocating simple lifestyles. Among the highlights, the resolution called for "the continued practice of recycling ...reduction of consumption ... non-polluting forms of travel ...advocacy for God's creation in the pulpit ...congregational and household support and use of local, sustainable food...". See <http://www.covchurch.org/cov/news/item5659>

PAST ISSUES of this newsletter are now on-line at <http://www.ucov.com/FaithCompassionJustice.php>

SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS for future tips are welcome! Email me at hamptons@sbcglobal.net