



Animal Alliance of Canada

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Dear Friend,

With regret, I must tell you that to end the Canadian commercial harp seal hunt—the largest and cruelest marine mammal slaughter in the world—we're starting the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT.

Since June of last year, to protect the sealers from the dire effects of the boycott, I've been doing everything possible to convince the Canadian government and the fishing industry to phase out the commercial seal hunt. My warnings earned ridicule and contempt.

Before I explain what we'll be doing to make the boycott work, and how you can help, I want to bring you up to date about what's happened since June.

But first, I need to ask you to think about making a special commitment to the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT. I'm asking you to consider this commitment so that we can end the seals' suffering as quickly as we can, while causing as little economic harm to the sealers as possible.

The boycott will likely take at least two years to force the government and the sealers to give up the hunt (you'll learn why below). During the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT action years, will you please become a member of the Animal Alliance of Canada (AAC) monthly giving program?

To end quickly both the cruelty to the seals and the devastating economic hardship to the sealers that the Canadian Seafood Boycott will inflict, you and I must end the commercial seal hunt as soon as possible.

The more effective you and I make the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT, the sooner we will make that happen. Your gifts—your steady financial support—will decide the effectiveness of the boycott, and when the seals finally live in peace.

Please, just for the duration of the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT, become an AAC monthly giver.

I know how difficult a monthly commitment can be, because I'm a monthly giver myself (\$50 per month), and most of our volunteers are too. We give monthly because we know what's needed to help the animals. Please join us.

For eight months we've been trying to persuade the Canadian government, the sealers, and the fishing industry to negotiate an end to the seal hunt, and avoid the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT.

You'll recall that last September, I asked you to send "Ultimatum" post cards to labour and business leaders in the fishing industry. Bill Barry, President of the Barry Group (Canada's largest fishing company), and Earl McCurdy, President of the Fishermen, Food and Allied Workers Union have received thousands of cards and letters.

The cards and letters came not just from you, but also from people around the world. At our urging, animal protection groups in the United States and the European Union took up the "Ultimatum" cause, and asked their hundreds of thousands of members to send messages too.

I, along with a delegation representing some of the largest animal welfare groups in the world, met with officials in the federal government's Department of Fisheries and Oceans to personally warn them about the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT.

We've added our name to newspaper ads run by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) in both the U. S. and Canada. The HSUS has taken the initiative to contact major seafood buyers in the U.S., and they've told us that the companies' senior executives have contacted Canadian government officials to say that they will support the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT. We're placing "URGENT NOTICE TO FISHERMEN" ads in fishing industry publications and regional newspapers in Atlantic Canada.

A media release that I issued earlier this month went to newspapers and radio and television stations in every fishing region of Canada. You can read the full release at our CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT web site <http://BoycottCanadianSeafood.net>. Here's what it said in part,

"We've been lobbying the federal government and the fishing industry for months. We've been trying to give Canada's politicians and the fishing industry time to negotiate an orderly phase out of the seal hunt so they can avoid the boycott," says boycott strategist Stephen Best. So far, the federal government has refused to end the seal hunt, and the fishing industry has refused to meet with boycott organizers.

In 1984, Best implemented an International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) boycott of Canadian seafood in the United Kingdom that lowered the wholesale price paid for Canadian seafood at Britain's largest fish market, Billingsgate Market, by 50%. Major British grocery chains, Tesco and Safeway, along with most of Britain's fish and chip shops, joined in the boycott.

Best expects the 2005 CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT to lower the wholesale price of Canadian seafood exported to the U.S. by 25% to 50%, costing the Canadian fishing industry between \$825 million to \$1.65 billion annually ...

"According to the Canadian government, the most optimistic value of the seal hunt is \$16 million. The CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT will cost the fishing industry fifty to a hundred times the value of the seal hunt," says Liz White, Director of Animal Alliance of Canada, one of the organizations spearheading the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT ...

Both the United States and the European Union have Country of Origin Labeling for seafood. “All a seafood shopper has to do to help the seals is look for **PRODUCT OF CANADA** and buy an alternative,” White says.

We’ve done all we can to persuade the Canadian government, the sealers, and the fishing industry to end the seal hunt, and stop the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT. Rather than take our warning seriously, they’ve chosen to treat you and me—and people around the world who, like us, care about animals and the environment—with contempt.

I can tell you that this response—while saddening—was not unexpected. We warned them over and over again, but the fact is that until the sealers and the fishing industry actually suffer catastrophic, unendurable declines in income—for two consecutive years, or more—they will kill seals.

So, the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT is on. It *will* strip the Canadian commercial harp seal hunt of all its economic value. The commercial seal hunt is about money. Take out the money, and it *will* die, just as it did once before.

Before concluding that it would take nothing less than a consumer boycott of Canadian seafood to end the commercial seal hunt, we undertook an extensive investigation into consumer boycotts in general, and seafood boycotts in particular. The full report is available on the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT web site.

We looked at three seafood boycotts: the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) United Kingdom Canadian fish boycott (1984-1985) that ended the large vessel harp seal hunt, the Earth Island Institute tuna/dolphin boycott (1986-1990) that made dolphin-safe tuna the standard in the U.S., and the SeaWeb swordfish boycott (1998-2000) that saved the Atlantic swordfish from near extinction.

All these boycotts achieved their objectives, and, as you can see, lasted two years or more.

That’s why I’m asking you to join our monthly giving program, and remain a monthly donor for the duration of the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT. Based on the history of consumer seafood boycotts, I expect your special commitment will need to last for two years.

Also, much was learned from the IFAW boycott. IFAW achieved its immediate objectives: an end to the large, ship-based hunt and an end to subsidies. The organization assumed that with these gone that the hunt would end. To some extent, it did. But, IFAW did not kill the seal hunt off when it had the chance, and in 1995 it came back larger and crueller than anyone would have imagined.

The number of seals killed now is about 350,000 a year—more than at anytime since quota management was introduced in the early 1970s.

If the seals can rely on your support, I can promise you this: we will not make the mistake IFAW made in 1985. Our goal is the end of the commercial seal hunt—nothing less—and I will not call off the Canadian Seafood Boycott until it is achieved.

This is *our* fight. The seals need *both* of us. That's why I'm asking you to join the Animal Alliance of Canada monthly giving program. We must do all we can to make the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT work quickly. Each and every month we will have to remind consumers in the United States, the largest market for Canadian seafood, that

“To save the seals, please, don't buy Canadian seafood.
Look for the **PRODUCT OF CANADA** label
and choose compassion, not cruelty.”

We'll be using the Internet, radio, television, newspapers, magazines, earned media, and word of mouth.

For example, over 70% of seafood is purchased in restaurants. That's why I've included in this letter the new **BOYCOTT BILLS**. Please keep them in your wallet, and use them when you pay a restaurant bill. Just leave one with your cash or credit card. Ask your server to pass it on to the chef or manager.

It's an easy way to get the message out. You can photocopy the **BOYCOTT BILLS**—as many as you like—and pass them on to friends. Or, download them from the CANADIAN SEAFOOD BOYCOTT web site.

You've joined me in fighting for animal protection issues that everyone said could not be won. Yet we won them. The commercial seal hunt is another impossible issue that you and I can win.

Please make this special commitment for the seals. With your help, two years from now, you and I will be able to look back on this day as the day the permanent demise of the Canadian commercial seal hunt began.

With thanks,



Liz White, *Director*

P.S. Remember to use your **BOYCOTT BILLS**. If you need more, you can download them from our Canadian Seafood Boycott web site. Or check the box on your donor form, and I'll send you some more. The Canadian Seafood Boycott starts today. For the seals' sake, help me make it a short boycott.