

**MARKETING**

**PEI Shellfish Festival showcases local product**

North American chefs vie for honors in culinary competition

The Prince Edward Island Shellfish Festival, held Sept. 16 to 18 in Charlottetown, marked its 10th year of showcasing fresh local shellfish in culinary demonstrations, chef's competitions and educational seminars. The event annually attracts 8,000 consumers and seafood professionals to PEI to sample chowders, steamed shellfish and freshly shucked oysters in the event's main tent as well as the new Culinary Institute of Canada Food Pavilion, where instructors and students demo'd local seafood.

One of the main events, the Annual PEI Shellfish Chef Challenge, hosted by the Culinary Institute of Canada, drew 17 chefs from across North America. Each chef was presented with local Malpeque oysters, clams, mussels, scallops and rock crab to incorporate into a three-course meal within five hours. The grand-prize winner was 25-year-old Chef Justin Labossiere of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, who was

awarded \$10,000. His winning seafood entries were Rock Crab Sausage and Pan Fried Malpeque Oyster, with



Shellfish Chef Challenge winner Justin Labossiere claimed the \$10,000 prize.

softshell-clam-and-bacon ragout, celery root custard and mushroom foam, and Salsify and Mussel "Linguine" and Bay Scallop Tortellini, with mussel and Vacherin cheese pave and tarragon-vermouth-butter sauce. Chef-Instructor

Allan Williams of the Culinary Institute of Canada planned and orchestrated the event, which is designed to promote the use of PEI shellfish.

A U.S. and Europe Export Seminar during the festival gave PEI seafood processors an opportunity to introduce their products to Canadian trade commissioners and seafood buyers from the United States and Europe. These representatives explained their respective markets to PEI's seafood exporters. PEI exported more than \$161 million in seafood products in 2004, with almost 80 percent going to the United States and the remaining 20 percent to Europe.

Trade Commissioners of the Canadian consulates from the United States, Brussels, Paris and The Netherlands brought buyers from their respective regions with them.

Funding for the competition, the seminar and associated events was provided by the Atlantic Canada Lobster

and Seafood Promotion Group and by Trade Team PEI. The festival allows chefs and buyers to connect directly with shellfish suppliers at the source. — Robert Danhi

*Written by Chef Robert Danhi*