



Seafood Processor Grants

Tasmanian Seafoods Pty Ltd (Smithton)

Funding: \$80,000

Start date: September 2021

End date: March 2022

Status: COMPLETED

Project overview

- Purchase and installation of innovation and/or branded packaging infrastructure
- Diversification of products through new processing technique(s), packaging or promotion(s)
- Other – Purchase Metal Detector

Project description

Tasmanian Seafoods were successful in receiving \$80,000 support from the Tasmanian Government to install a metal detector and contribute to the setup costs of innovative packaging for a supermarket abalone product targeted towards US and Australian retail markets to reduce reliance on China.

The abalone product has been developed with sales agents and marketers to produce a sliced, cooked and ready to eat abalone meat product. The product is a set weight per item (100 grams/3.53 oz), achieved by slicing the product and infilling the clear retort pouch at set weights with a solid backing tray to keep the product flat on one side. The product is then cooked in a retort, allowing it to be stored at room temperature and providing a two-year shelf life. To access retail markets they have developed compliant packaging with increased product security by way of seals, blister packs and the installation of a metal detector for product testing within the production line. It is packaged in a branded cardboard sleeve promoting the product as Tasmanian.

An initial shipment was freighted to Los Angeles ahead of Chinese New Year, which is expected to be the main sales period for this product. The business has been able to engage new customers, access a new market, increase the value of export sales, upskill their workforce, employ staff for additional hours, increase revenue, increase product value and hopes to continue work to increase domestic sales.

Future work will involve additional market research to develop packaging sizing and their own branding for the Australian domestic market and continuing to work with customers in the US to grow the market opportunity there. As further shipments are exported there are some details to refine to ensure the product's visual appearance is that of a premium product on supermarket shelves, and to efficiently slice the abalone.



Figure I: Sliced Tasmanian abalone in retort pouches, on a pallet in Los Angeles in January 2022. Source: Tasmanian Seafoods Pty Ltd, Smithton.

