

From page 14 - *Kildare Fisheries*

“We were able to go back into the marketplace and say we don’t have to worry about trucks and expensive air bills,” said Rayner. “The freight savings basically covered the cost of the pasteurization process, and we are able to tack on additional value because people can have that fresh experience without having shelf-life issues.”

Just before the covid pandemic, the demand for pasteurized meat had increased to the point that 180 pounds per hour wasn’t enough anymore.

“So, I designed a continuous cook and cool pasteurization system and had Martin’s Machine Shop build it for me,” said Rayner, adding the newer process allows them to produce 1,000 pounds per hour.

Kildare Fisheries is also a family affair, with Rayner’s son, Collin, a manager at the business.

Collin said one way the company looks to thank those who have supported them over the years is through event sponsorship.

Kildare Fisheries was the title sponsor for the 2025 15U Boys Ray Carter Cup in Summerside and will be again for the baseball tournament in 2026. They will also be sponsoring the 2026 Baseball Canada Cup.

Collin said sponsoring events isn’t about selling product, but giving back to their community.

One of their newest products, Jonah crab cakes, came about directly from their efforts to pasteurize the crab’s meat and their sponsorship efforts.

Collin said everyone in his family uses their pasteurized meat product themselves, like his mother, Nicole Rayner, to



Collin and Jamie Rayner of Kildare Fisheries with Summerside mayor Dan Kutcher after announcing the seafood processing company will be the title sponsor for the 15U boys Ray Carter Cup for 2025 and 2026. Kildare Fisheries will also be the title sponsor for the 2026 Baseball Canada Cup also in Summerside. Submitted photo

make homemade crab cakes.

When they began serving these crab cakes at events they were helping to sponsor, their popularity led Kildare Fisheries to create a commercial line of frozen crab cakes.

Based on Nicole’s crab cake

recipe, and with the help of Canada’s Smartest Kitchen, part of Holland College in Charlottetown, Kildare Fisheries launched the new product line in December 2025.

Rayner said he’s very thankful for what Kildare Fisheries has

been able to accomplish over the last 30 years.

“Our plan has always been about being sustainable, giving back to our community when we could, create employment and help with development, and we’re doing that,” he said.

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“If I had to guess, I would say it was down a bit, but I don’t think the real impacts we’ve seen in mortalities are necessarily reflected in last year’s sale figures,” he said.

Elsewhere, it’s status quo when it comes to protocols around North Atlantic right whales in lobster fishing areas, said Jenkins, meaning management measures will remain the same for 2026. If the endangered whales are spotted in an area during the lobster season, DFO could place temporary fishing prohibitions, including closures.

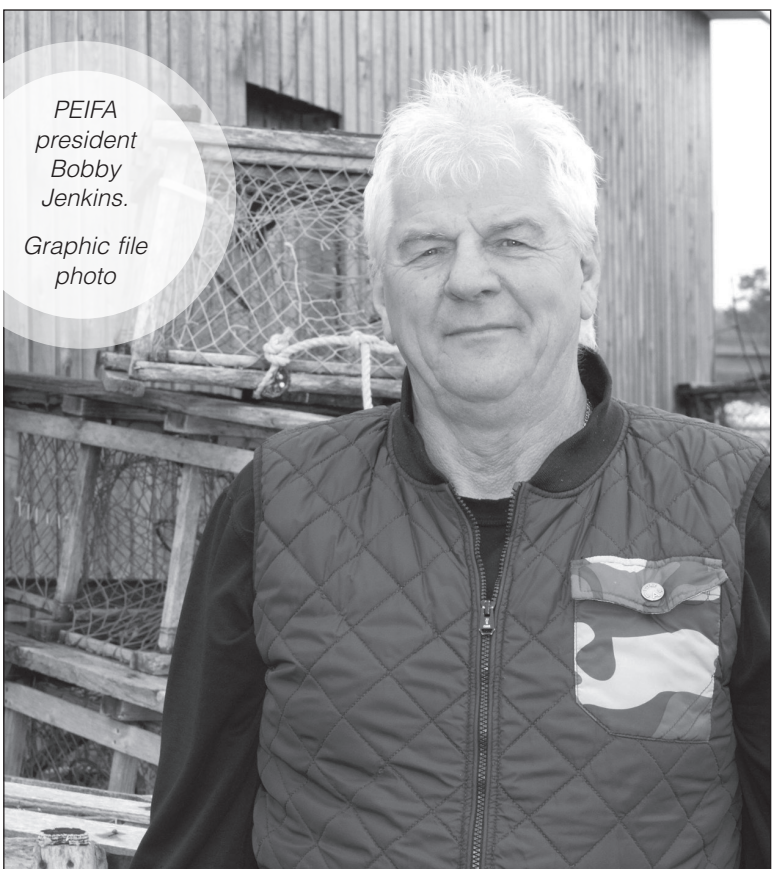
“It’s something that is monitored every year depending on when the right whales show up and how many,” said Jenkins.

In 2025, the PEIFA thought US tariffs could have an impact on the industry before the season opened, but fortunately the tariffs ‘came off the table’, said Jenkins.

“We are monitoring the situation closely, but as this point we don’t know,” he said.

He added China lifting their 25 per cent tariffs on Canadian seafood, particularly lobster and snow crab, will help the local industry some.

“Overall, though, the Americans are the biggest buyer of Canadian lobster,” said Jenkins.



Looking to the future, Jenkins said the PEIFA recently had a meeting with the federal fisheries minister where a number of topics were discussed. While not ready to go into details about their conversations, Jenkins said

overall it was a good discussion with the federal minister.

“We felt it was a positive meeting,” he said.

Jenkins wished all fishers a safe and prosperous 2026 season.



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