

Pollock goes nationwide

A new pilot program using Alaska pollock for the nationwide school lunch program is being established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Sens. Ted Stevens and Frank Murkowski, both R-Alaska, said recently.

The senators were notified recently by James Handley, administrator of the USDA Agriculture Marketing Service, about the decision to use Alaska pollock in the school lunch program.

Handley is beginning the pilot program at the request of Stevens and Murkowski, who first contacted Agriculture Department officials in 1984 regarding the purchase of Alaska seafood for the na-

tional program.

"The Department of Agriculture's decision will open up a significant new market for Alaskan pollock and serve as an impetus to further development of the state's bottomfish resource," Stevens said.

Murkowski said the action will help "Americanize" the fishery resources within the U.S. 200-mile economic zone.

"One specification of the program which is particularly noteworthy is that all of the pollock used in the program must be caught by fishermen on U.S. fishing vessels. In addition, we are working to expand the test program to include Alaska salmon," he said.