

Halibut Connoisseurs Confused

By 'Greenland' Halibut Specie

A product known as "Greenland" halibut is being confused by some food shoppers as true halibut, H. E. Crowther, acting director of the Interior Department's Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, said recently.

"Greenland halibut is an entirely different species," Crowther said. "It is smaller and generally different in taste and texture from true halibut." Also, he said, some store displays and advertisements in publications drop the word "Greenland" in identifying the product, or put it in small print.

"Our concern is not with the amount of Greenland halibut that may be consumed, but rather with the reaction of consumers who may purchase this product and confuse it with North Pacific halibut," Crowther said.

"Although Greenland halibut is a good food on its own merits, the uninformed consumer might be unprepared for the difference in flavor and texture," Crowther added. "The result could cause economic injury to the United States halibut fishing industry."

This potential problem for the domestic halibut industry, which is concentrated on the West Coast, has been brought to public attention by members of Congress.

Reports from the industry indicate some marketing difficulties with the 1966 West Coast halibut catch, the Bureau says.

The Bureau attributes the difficulty, at least in part, to heavy imports of Greenland halibut, which is caught in the North Atlantic and which sells at lower prices.

Nearly all of the imports have been received in the New England area, but the product is retailed throughout the United States, the Bureau reports.

Greenland halibut has other

common names: turbot, Greenland turbot, American turbot, and blue halibut.

The Halibut Association of North America informed the Bureau it has petitioned the Food and Drug Administration to require that Greenland halibut be marketed in the United States under another name.

The Alaska State Legislature snet a similar plea to the Senate Commerce Committee in Washington, D. C., noting that Atlantic and Pacific halibut "are the only fish which have historically been widely distributed in the United States under the name of halibut."