**Roundtable 3 – Making it work with Nova Scotia’s Educational Institutions**

A varied and wide-ranging discussion. Key points included:

* Formalized training would give credibility to jobs in the seafood sector, and the industry as a whole. Often seafood sector jobs are looked at as something you take when you can’t get a job anywhere else – that needs to change.
* The image of the seafood industry needs to change at the high school level, among career advisors, guidance counsellors
* Industry and academia need to work collaboratively on the development of any proficiency skills qualifications/programs. Input from the industry is critical.
* Lots of discussion around the idea of a food service-wide training program that would provide appropriate skills/certifications (WHMIS, food handling, etc.) to entry level employees at a range of food service operations/plants – whether it be a seafood plant, chicken processing plant or brewery
* Customized training also needed in-house, as jobs/processes differ from company to company
* Also a lot of discussion about existing 6, 8, 10-week pre-employment, roadmap to employment programs that are government-funded through Community/Social Services, and the role they may play going forward. Many participants of those programs are hired by seafood sector companies; the programs give those without high school/post-secondary education the basic skills and confidence to move into jobs
* Both NSCC and universities could have roles in seafood sector training, as could private colleges
* Any skills training needs to be consistent across the board, common standards among businesses and companies in the industry
* Different levels of training required for different levels of employees – senior quality management staff vs. frontline staff
* Staff retention again discussed – one participant said they have approximately 40 positions each year, but go through 100-150 employees in a year; a “revolving door”
* When employees can make decent money and have consistent hours they stay; low wages an issue