Tis the Season ... To Start Eating Healthy

Fish and Shellfish Taste Great, Help Protect Against Heart Disease

ORLANDO, Fla., Dec. 27 /PRNewswire/ -- Millions of Americans every year make their annual New Year’s resolution to eat healthier, telling themselves that “this year will be different.” Of course, year after year, many of these promises go unfulfilled. For Americans who “resolve” to eat healthier in 2002, the health benefits of a diet rich in fish and seafood will make it easy to stick with their goal.

“Nutritionists cite fish and shellfish as low in fat, easily digestible and a good source of protein, important minerals and vitamins,” said Dick Rivera, president of Red Lobster, the world’s largest casual dining seafood company. “Plus, these foods taste great, are easy to prepare at home and are plentiful on restaurant menus.” Probably the largest benefit is that fish and shellfish contain Omega-3 fatty acids, which are known to protect against heart disease, stroke and sudden cardiac arrest and may also help block production of substances that aggravate inflammatory and autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. There is also a growing body of research that shows high levels of Omega-3 fatty acids may help prevent symptoms of depression and other mood disorders.

Although plant-based Omega-3 fatty acids exist in some oils, vegetables and tofu, foods such as fish are the most efficient source.

For 2002, the seafood experts at Red Lobster offer the following tips to maximize the health benefits of fish and shellfish:

* Choose Wisely. Cold-water, fatty fish such as salmon, mackerel, sardines, lake trout and albacore tuna contain the highest concentration of Omega-3 fatty acids. Shrimp, lobster, clams, oysters and fresh water fish also are a significant source.

* Eat the Right Amount. Optimal intake is estimated to be 1 to 1.5 grams of Omega-3 fatty acids per day, according to the National Fisheries Institute. This is easily obtained by eating two or more 5- to 7-ounce portions of fatty fish per week.

* Cook It Right. Baking, broiling, poaching, grilling, microwaving and sauteing in little or no fat are the preferred cooking methods. Deep-frying adds calories and saturated fats, and the very high cooking temperatures destroy Omega-3s.

Red Lobster operates 660 seafood casual dining restaurants in the United States and Canada. For the Red Lobster nearest you, please call 1-800-LOBSTER or visit www.redlobster.com.