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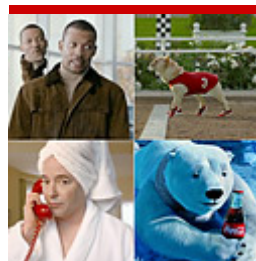
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Save the Seals by Skipping the Scallops?

By **JULIE RAWE** Monday, Mar. 28, 2005

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The same activists who helped introduce the world to dolphin-safe tuna are about to take consumers on a similarly gruesome guilt trip. In an effort to abolish Canada's government-sanctioned seal hunts, in which pups as young as 12 days are fair game to get clubbed to death, the Humane Society of the United States and other animal-rights groups will launch a campaign this week to pressure Americans to boycott all seafood from our neighbor to the north. With a kickoff scheduled for March 29, the official starting date of Canada's seal hunt, the Humane Society is printing tens of thousands of bumper stickers and pledge forms to be distributed at supermarkets and restaurants across the U.S. And thanks to unrelated legislation, the U.S. will begin enforcing a law on April 4 that requires labels on fresh and frozen seafood to identify its country of origin.

As the seal population has climbed back up to historic heights, so too has the demand for pelts in a few countries. Most of the hunt is conducted in economically depressed Newfoundland by some 4,000 off-season fishermen. "This is an important part of their income," says Geoff Regan, Canada's Minister of Fisheries



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and Oceans. But animal-rights activists are betting that because the U.S. buys nearly two-thirds of Canada's exported seafood, a boycott will inspire the industry to end the hunt. They also contend that Newfoundland, a former whaling hub that now makes a bundle from whale watching, can overcome the economic disruption. "That kind of cultural shift has happened before," says Canadian environmental activist Rick Smith. "We can do the same with seals." --By Julie Rawe. With reporting by Tom Duffy

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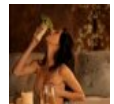
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