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# Seafood Company Drops Supplier Linked to Slavery, Human Trafficking In AP Investigation

**AP**

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BANGKOK, Thailand (AP) — Thailand's biggest seafood company said Wednesday it has cut ties with a supplier named in an Associated Press report after determining it might be involved with forced labor and other abuses.

The statement by Thai Union Frozen Products follows a year-long investigation that linked severe abuses on Southeast Asian fishing trawlers to dinner tables in the U.S. and around the world.

"Thai Union embraces AP's finding," the company said in a statement that calls the use of slave labor "utterly unacceptable." Thai Union said the supplier was "terminated" immediately.

The statement did not list a specific company, and Thai Union declined further comment.

The AP interviewed dozens of current and former slaves who were working on trawlers in and around Benjina, a remote island village in Indonesia. Many said they were tricked, kidnapped or sold. They described working up to 22 hours a day, beatings and, in the worst cases, death at sea. AP journalists followed a large shipment of slave-caught seafood by satellite to a Thai port town, where trucks picked up the fish and redistributed it to dozens of companies and the country's largest fish market.

Thai Union Manufacturing Co. is a subsidiary of Thai Union Frozen Products PCL, Thailand's largest seafood corporation, with \$3.5 billion in annual sales. It owns Chicken of the Sea and is buying Bumble Bee, although the AP did not observe any tuna fisheries. It also is the maker of some of the most popular brands of canned pet food, including Fancy Feast, Meow Mix and Iams.

"Consumers can rest assured that our current products are not tainted with the alleged trade supplier," Thai Union said. "This is to prove that Thai Union takes the issue of human rights violation extremely seriously."

