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Big Stone Bay

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A Fleet of Fish Trucks and a Boat.

Cameron “Cam” McMurry of Big Stone Bay Fishery doesn’t have a family heritage in commercial fishing. In fact, he never liked fish until he was about 16. He says, “I always used to think fish were slimy until I was a little older and didn’t live at home anymore.”

However, he says he’s always liked to do physical and outdoor things, and he apprenticed with Mackinaw City’s Bell’s Fishery for 10 years as a young man. There he acquired a taste for fish (he now likes nothing better than delicacies such as trout and walleye cheeks) and learned enough about the fish business to start his own.

“I was 26 when I started this business, in a building near my home, and I was terrified.” But he figured



“Cam” McMurry

that he knew enough people to supply the fish, and he could figure out a way to sell them, even if it were to people in the next door campground.

Now he's not afraid to get millions of pounds of fish and hundreds of thousands in a day. He's careful about choosing his fish suppliers and says, "We know the ones that take care of their catch by using ice and good handling methods."

He's proud of his Big Stone Bay crew, whether they are cleaning, filleting, packing fish into boxes or loading them into his large, white, distinctively painted fleet of trucks.

"All the people who work for me have worked for me for a long time, and everybody knows what they are doing. I'm happy putting all of these people to work. I always like it when there is a lot to do and I get up early and plan what everybody is going to do, and time just seems to fly by."

"We're smart, and we've survived for 25 years in the fish business because I've persevered. We have a good reputation, and over the counter business has helped. Somehow, I managed to be a success. I'm not out to be a millionaire, but I am happy cruising along, and I am doing all right and times are good. Some years are better than others, but I haven't gone hungry yet. My kids all got new shoes."

McMurry's family likes fish and some are also involved in the business. One of his daughters regularly helps with bookkeeping and paperwork, and one of his sons is getting involved with him, too. They're excited about starting a chub fishery on Lake Michigan. Perhaps a second generation of McMurrays will sustain the business their father started.

The Story

Early Whitefish

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Fun Fish Fact

The five Great Lakes hold a combined total of about 5500 million cubic miles of fresh water.

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