

Lobster – from fertilizer to delicacy

By Megan Willett, Business Insider

It's time to eat all of the fresh lobster, seafood, and summer fare we can before Labor Day.

But here's something to think about while downing every lobster roll in sight before summer's end – our beloved shellfish was once a throw-away food.



Lobster is everywhere in Boston. Photo/LTN file

Back when the first European settlers reached North America, they wrote that lobsters were so plentiful that piles up to two feet high would wash ashore in Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Instead of this leading to epic clam bakes with buckets filled with butter, the colonists were embarrassed by these unsightly “cockroaches of the sea.”

In fact, lobsters were so plentiful and undesirable that they were commonly used as fertilizer and fish bait by Native Americans and colonists alike.

Their abundance also meant colonists had easy access to protein during bad seasons or harvests, so lobster quickly

garnered a reputation as the poor man's meal. They were fed to prisoners, apprentices, and slaves as a way to save money.

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