



Arcade Claw Offers Live Lobster Prizes
SCARBOROUGH, Maine, Feb. 6, 2006

(AP) You don't have to be a fisherman to catch lobsters anymore. At a neighborhood

The apparatus is a new version of the old-style amusement game where players put in a quarter or two

When a lobster is caught, the restaurants cook it for free and serve it with side dishes.

"He looks like a keeper," said Frank Margel of Westbrook, eyeing a mottled-green crustacean at Eight C

It's easier said than done, however.

Unlike stationary stuffed animals, the lobsters flap their tails, flail their claws and squirm this way and th

"Those lobsters are lively. They're ready for competition," Margel said a minute later _ and \$2 poorer _

Marine Ecological Habitats in Biddeford has been making the Love Maine Lobster game for just over a

The Maine-made machines can be found in restaurants and bars in Texas, Louisiana, Florida, Michigan

The game has its critics. Animal rights activists contend it's cruel to toss a lobster into a boiling pot of w

"Turning animal cruelty into a game is absolutely hideous," said Karin Robertson of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

A restaurant in Pittsburgh removed its lobster game last week in response to PETA's campaign against the machine.

Paul Carrozzi, owner of Roland's Seafood Grill, said he doesn't agree the machine is inhumane, but removed it last week.

Zucchero maintains that the machine has a gentle claw that won't hurt the animals.

"If it did," he said, "we'd have problems because then it would be destroying our inventory."

At Eight Corners Market, customers typically play the game 25 to 30 times a day and catch about eight lobsters a week.

When the game's in play, it usually draws a crowd. A lighthouse-style beacon flashes on top of the machine.

"If somebody's playing this game and someone else walks in the store, I guarantee they'll play because they want to catch a lobster."

In Louisiana, Bill Bodin owns two of the machines, which he placed in seafood and Mexican restaurants.

At Eight Corners Market, Margel gets 30 seconds to catch a lobster for \$2. Or he can get three plays for \$5.

Working a joystick and a pair of buttons, Margel lowers the claw, clamps it around the lobster and attempts to lift it.

Margel leaves empty-handed, but he had good time.

"Who cares if you get a lobster for two bucks?" he said.



(AP)