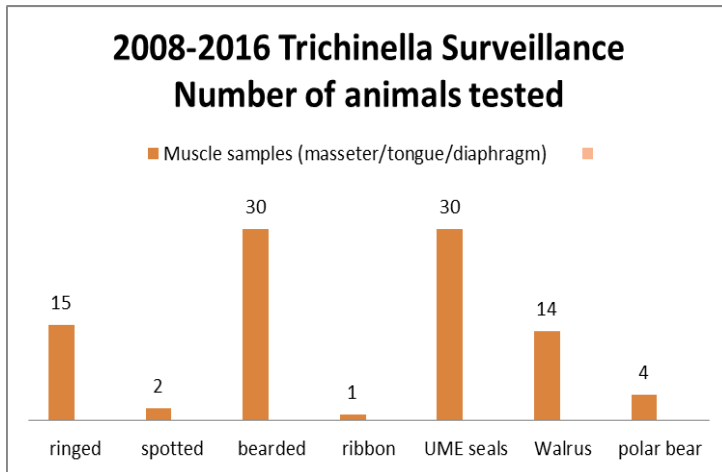


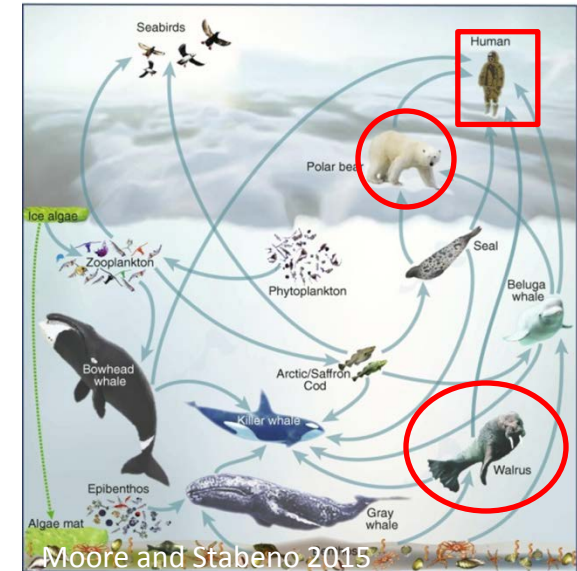


Surveillance of *Trichinella* in meat from subsistence-harvested Ice Seals, Pacific Walrus, and Polar Bears: 2008-2016

Trichinella, a nematode that forms cysts in the muscle, is an important marine mammal parasite. The most recent confirmed multi-person outbreak in Alaska on Saint Lawrence Island was in 2016 and was related to consumption of undercooked walrus meat. Climate related sea ice and ocean temperature changes, shifting foraging ecology may be setting the stage for increased rates of trichinella in subsistence-harvested marine mammals. The role and identity of intermediate and final hosts that make up the Arctic life cycle of trichinella are not well understood; however, the DWM continues to monitor for occurrence.



Dave Ramey filtering meat samples for evidence of *trichinella*.



Preliminary key findings:

- **NO trichinella** larvae were detected in meat samples of ice seals (n=78) or Pacific walrus (n=14) in Barrow.
- **Food Safety:** Our findings confirm that incidences remain extremely low among marine mammals from the Bering Strait, Chukchi Sea, and Beaufort Sea despite the recent confirmed outbreak on St. Lawrence island.
 - However, 3/4 of polar bears sampled tested positive for trichinella.
 - **COOKING** walrus and polar bear meat well will kill the parasite and prevent infection!



Trichinella larvae under the microscope (10X magnification)

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