Red tape blocking gator meat sales in outside states

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Louisiana alligator meat sellers have put it on dining tables in some restaurants, but red tape is blocking sales to some other states.

There is a problem even though federal regulations banning the interstate sale of alligator meat have been dropped.

“We can sell it, but we can’t,” said Harlan Pearce, general manager of Battistella’s Sea Foods Inc.

“THE BIGGEST problem we have now is that each state has its own regulations,” he said. “For instance, we tried to go into North Carolina, but the Wildlife and Fisheries in those states have their own laws.”

Battistella’s, which pioneered the sale of shark meat in the New Orleans area, bought up hundreds of pounds of alligator meat during last year’s hunting season, anticipating amendments to the federal regulations.

Pearce said that while Battistella’s ant-