



## **Commercial Fishery Possession Limit Adjustment**

### **NOTICE**

**Effective 0001 hours, Sunday, May 30, 2021, the following possession limits will be in effect for Connecticut's commercial fisheries:**

#### **Black Sea Bass:**

- For holders of a Black Sea Bass License Endorsement: 150 pounds (no change from current possession limit).
- From lobster pots when in possession of lobsters: 10 fish. This does not apply to personal use lobster license holders.

#### **Summer Flounder:**

- For holders of a Summer Flounder License Endorsement: 250 pounds.

The Department was recently able to secure multiple quota transfers from neighboring states: 200,000 pounds of scup summer period quota from Massachusetts, 15,000 pounds of black sea bass quota from Maine, and 15,000 pounds of black sea bass quota from New Hampshire. The Department will continue to monitor landings and solicit input from commercial fishermen and seafood dealers to determine how best to manage these quota increases.

### **REMINDERS**

**American lobster:** The minimum carapace length is 3-3/8 inches.

**American eel:** No possession limit. Minimum length is 9 inches.

#### **Atlantic menhaden:**

- The possession limit for commercial harvest of menhaden in CT waters is 12,000 pounds.
- For the landing of menhaden taken commercially from outside of CT waters, the possession limit is 120,000 pounds.
- **Call-in required:** To accurately monitor landings and manage the commercial quota, the Marine Fisheries Program and DEEP Environmental Conservation Police have developed a call-in system. When in possession of 6,000 pounds or more of menhaden and *prior to departure and again prior to landing*, fishermen must notify DEEP Environmental Conservation Police Dispatch by telephone at 860.424-3503.

**Bluefish:** 1,200 pound possession limit.

**Jonah crab:** In the commercial fishery no Jonah crab less than 4.75 inches carapace width may be possessed or sold. Possession of egg bearing Jonah crabs or crabs from which the eggs have been removed is prohibited. Jonah crabs must also be landed whole. Landing claws only is prohibited. Possession of more than two loose claws per body is prohibited. The possession limit in non-trap

fisheries is 1,000 crabs. There is no possession limit in the lobster pot fishery. (Connecticut licensing statutes do not allow crabs to be taken by pots other than lobster pots.)

**Scup:**

- For holders of a Scup License Endorsements: 1,000 pounds.
- For Restricted Commercial Fishing License holders: 60 fish.
- From lobster pots when in possession of lobsters: 10 fish. This does not apply to personal use lobster license holders.

**Smooth dogfish:** 500 pounds possession limit. Commercial fishermen in state waters and in possession of a valid state commercial fishing license can eviscerate and remove the head and all fins of smooth dogfish while at sea provided smooth dogfish make up at least 25 percent, by weight, of total catch on board at the time of landing. Such fishermen may retain other sharks on board provided the fins of other shark species remain naturally attached to the carcass through offloading.

**Spiny dogfish:** 6,000 pounds. Spiny dogfish are managed under a regional annual quota. The fishery will close when 100% of the regional quota has been harvested.

**Tautog:** Closed May 1 through June 30. Will re-open July 1, 2021. Mandatory tagging is required for all commercially landed blackfish.

**Weakfish:** 100 pound possession limit.

**Winter flounder:** 50 pounds or 38 fish possession limit beginning April 15, 2021. Federally permitted vessels are permitted to land the higher federal limits of fish taken from federal waters.

All of the possession limits listed above apply to the aggregate of all persons on board the vessel per trip or per day whichever is the longer period of time. Transfer of these species between vessels at sea is prohibited. In any instance where there is a violation of the possession limit on board a vessel carrying more than one person when the catch is commingled, the violation shall be deemed to have been committed by the owner of the vessel, or the operator of the vessel, if the owner is not on board. When any person on a vessel is commercial fishing, the commercial possession limit applies to the entire vessel and no person on that vessel may also possess fish under a recreational creel limit.

**For current commercial fishery trip limits and quota status:**

**Call 860-434-6374 24/7 for a recorded message of current possession limits, or see:** [www.ct.gov/deep/TL](http://www.ct.gov/deep/TL).

The Department monitors landings and adjusts trip limits according to Department regulations in an attempt to provide fishing opportunity throughout the year for all participants in the commercial fishery. In addition, the Department strives to provide advance notification of trip limit changes, although this may not always be possible due to rapidly escalating or unanticipated landings. In such circumstances, only a short notification period may be possible.

The information provided in this notice is a summary of possession limits and other general rules only. For complete information on commercial fishing regulations please see: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/fishing/commercial/marinecircpdf.pdf>, or contact the DEEP Marine Fisheries Program by email at [deep.marine.fisheries@ct.gov](mailto:deep.marine.fisheries@ct.gov), by mail at PO Box 719, Old Lyme, CT 06371 or leaving a voicemail at 860.434.6043 between the hours of 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer that is committed to complying with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please contact Barbara Viadella or Cenit Mirabal, DEEP Office of Diversity and Equity at (860) 418-5910 or by email @ [deep.accommodations@ct.gov](mailto:deep.accommodations@ct.gov) if you are requesting a communication aid or service, have limited proficiency in English, need some other type of accommodation, or if you wish to file an ADA or Title VI discrimination complaint. In order to

facilitate efforts to provide an accommodation, please request all accommodations as soon as possible following notice of any agency hearing, meeting, program or event.