



2023 Commercial Fishery Management Plan

JANUARY – APRIL

Summer flounder: The fishery will open on January 1st with a 12,000 pound per bi-weekly (two-week) period landing limit. The limit will be adjusted periodically to maintain a steady landing rate, with the goal of landing not more than 35% of the annual quota through April 30. The first bi-weekly period begins Sunday, January 1st and ends Saturday, January 14th. Each subsequent bi-weekly period will begin on Sunday at 0001 hours and end 14 days later on Saturday at 2359 hours. Call-in / Call-out is required under bi-weekly landing limits: prior to departure and again prior to offloading call EnCon Police at 860.424.3503 (24/7) and provide vessel name, Captain's name, departure date, return date, port of landing and prior to offloading the hail weight of summer flounder onboard. A summer flounder license endorsement is required to land summer flounder.

Scup (porgy): Follow Federal Winter 1 Period rules: initially 50,000 pound possession limit, then dropping to 1,000 pounds when 80% of the Period quota has been harvested. No scup license endorsement is required during the Federal Winter 1 or Winter 2 Periods.

Black sea bass: The fishery will open on January 1st with a 3,500 pound per bi-weekly (two-week) period landing limit. The limit will be adjusted periodically to maintain a steady landing rate, with the goal of landing not more than 25% of the annual quota through April 30. The first bi-weekly period begins Sunday, January 1st and ends Saturday, January 14th. Each subsequent bi-weekly period will begin on Sunday at 0001 hours and end 14 days later on Saturday at 2359 hours. A black sea bass license endorsement is required to land sea bass, except that in the commercial lobster fishery when in possession of lobsters, the possession limit is 60 pounds.

MAY - SEPTEMBER

Scup (porgy): The possession limit will initially be 2,500 pounds. The possession limit will be adjusted periodically to maintain a steady landing rate and prevent a fishery closure, with the goal of landing 100% of the summer quota by September 30. A scup license endorsement is required to land scup, except a) for restricted commercial fishing license holders, who may possess 60 scup without a scup license endorsement, and b) in the commercial lobster fishery when in possession of lobsters, the possession limit is 10 scup.

MAY - OCTOBER

Summer flounder: The possession limit will initially be 1,000 pounds. The possession limit will be adjusted periodically to maintain a steady landing rate, with the goal of landing not more than 95% of the annual quota cumulatively through October 31. A summer flounder license endorsement is required to land summer flounder.

Black sea bass: The possession limit will initially be 600 pounds. The limit will be adjusted periodically to maintain a steady landing rate, with the goal of landing not more than 95% of the annual quota cumulatively through October 31. A black sea bass license endorsement is required to land sea bass, except that in the commercial lobster fishery when in possession of lobsters, the possession limit is 60 pounds.

OCTOBER - DECEMBER

Scup (porgy): Follow Federal Winter 2 Period rules. During the Federal Winter 2 Period the initial possession limit will be 12,000 pounds. This limit may be adjusted based on Winter 1 fishery performance.

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER

Summer flounder: The landing limit will initially be 10,000 pounds per weekly period. Each weekly period will begin on Sunday at 0001 hours and end 7 days later on Saturday at 2359 hours. The limit will be adjusted periodically to maintain a steady landing rate, with the goal of landing not more than 100% of the annual quota cumulatively by the end of the year. A summer flounder license endorsement is required to land summer flounder.

Black sea bass: The possession limit will initially be 2,000 pounds per weekly period. Each weekly period will begin on Sunday at 0001 hours and end 7 days later on Saturday at 2359 hours. The limit will be adjusted periodically to maintain a steady landing rate, with the goal of landing not more than 100% of the annual quota cumulatively by the end of the year. A black sea bass license endorsement is required to land sea bass, except that in the commercial lobster fishery when in possession of lobsters, the possession limit is 60 pounds.

ANNUAL

American eel: Minimum length is 9 inches.

American lobster: The closed season for lobster is September 8 through November 28. Minimum size is 3 3/8 inches.

Atlantic menhaden:

- The possession limit for the commercial harvest of menhaden in CT waters is 12,000 pounds until 90% of the annual quota has been landed.
- For the landing of menhaden taken from outside of CT waters:
 - 120,000 pound possession limit until 75% of the annual quota is landed then;
 - 20,000 pound possession limit until 90% of the quota is landed.
- Once 90% of the annual quota is landed, the directed fishery will be closed and the incidental catch limit will be 6,000 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 effective Jan 1. Possession limits will be adjusted periodically to maintain a steady monthly landing rate and prevent in-season closure, with the goal of landing 100% of the annual quota. To prevent significant change in the character of the fishery, such as large-scale targeted net fishing, the possession limit will not exceed 1,500 pounds.

Groundfish: The following federal commercial minimum lengths are in effect for CT waters: cod (19 in), haddock (16 in), pollock (19 in), witch flounder (13 in), yellowtail flounder (12 in), American plaice (12 in), winter flounder (12 in), and redfish (7 in).

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.)

Smooth dogfish: 500 pound possession limit effective Jan 1. The fishery will close when 100% of the quota has been landed.

Spiny dogfish: 6,000 pound possession limit effective Jan 1. Spiny dogfish are managed under a regional annual quota. The fishery will close when 100% of the regional quota has been harvested.

Tautog: 10 fish possession limit when fishing under a limited access (moratorium) license, and 3 fish when fishing under a restricted commercial fishing license. Open seasons are the months of April, July, August, and between Oct 8 and Dec 24. The minimum size is 16 inches. All commercially harvested Tautog must be tagged with tags provided by the Department.

Weakfish: 100 pounds all year.

Winter flounder: 50 pounds or 38 fish unless the fish were taken in federal waters under a federal groundfish permit.

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.

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, by mail at PO Box 719, Old Lyme, CT 06371 or by telephone 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. If you are seeking a communication aid or service, have limited proficiency in English, wish to file an ADA or Title VI discrimination complaint, or require some other accommodation, including equipment to facilitate virtual participation, please contact us at 860-418-5910 or by email at deep.accommodations@ct.gov. Any person needing an accommodation for hearing impairment may call the State of Connecticut relay number - 711. 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.