

Commercial Fishery Possession Limit Changes

NOTICE

Effective 0001 hours, Friday, May 19, 2023, the following possession limits will be in effect for Connecticut's commercial fisheries:

Scup:

- 2,500 pounds for holders of a Scup License Endorsement.
- For Restricted Commercial Fishing License holders: 100 fish.
- From lobster pots when in possession of lobsters: 10 fish. This does not apply to personal use lobster license holders.

Black Sea Bass:

- 300 pounds for holders of a Black Sea Bass License Endorsement.
- From lobster pots when in possession of lobsters: 60 pounds. No Black Sea Bass License Endorsement required. This does not apply to personal use lobster license holders.

Call-in required for black sea bass landings from lobster pots: To provide for timely monitoring of black sea bass landings from lobster pots, the Marine Fisheries Program is continuing the **mandatory weekly call-in reporting requirement for black sea bass landings from lobster pots**. Any commercial fisherman landing black sea bass from lobster pots **is required to contact the Marine Fisheries Program weekly (deadline of 2359 hours on Monday) by calling 860-447-4323** and leaving a message with the following information: the fisherman's name, commercial fishing plate number, the reporting week ending date (reporting weeks run Sunday through Saturday) and total pounds of black sea bass landed from lobster pots during the reporting week.

Additional notes concerning black sea bass landings from lobster pots:

- The weekly call-in reporting requirement is implemented under authority of CGS Sec. 26-157b. Failure to comply with this reporting requirement is punishable as a Class D misdemeanor and may result in commercial fishing license suspension.
- The weekly call-in reporting requirement is not a substitute for other existing reporting requirements. Fishermen must still report their landings in monthly commercial logbooks or via electronic vessel trip reports.
- Weekly call-in reports, as well as timely submission of monthly commercial logbooks, are crucial to maintenance of the opportunity for black sea bass landings from lobster pots. Failure on the part of fishery participants to adhere to the weekly call-in requirement or to submit monthly logbooks in a timely manner will lead to discontinuation of the allowance for seabass landings from lobster pots.
- The department may adjust the possession limit for black sea bass landed from lobster pots or discontinue the allowance for black sea bass landings from lobster pots at any time.
- Only holders of a Connecticut Commercial Lobster Pot Fishing License, a Connecticut Principal Commercial Fishing License, or a Connecticut Restricted Lobster Pot Fishing License may legally fish lobster pots in Connecticut state waters and therefore land black sea bass from lobster pots. As a

reminder, lobster pots must be tagged with current fishing year trap tags issued by the Department or New York Department of Environmental Conservation.

- Lobster pots cannot be fished in Connecticut state waters during the fall lobster closure (Sept. 8 – Nov. 28, inclusive). Therefore, no black sea bass may be landed from lobster pots during the fall closure.

For current commercial fishery trip limits and quota status, call 860-434-6374 24/7 for a recorded message of current possession limits, or visit 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.

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 leaving a voicemail at 860.434.6043 between the hours of 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

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