



2019 Commercial Fishery Possession Limits

NOTICE

The following possession limits will be in effect on May 1, 2019 for Connecticut's commercial fisheries. The possession limits will be periodically adjusted, if needed, to achieve 100% of each of the respective quotas by the end of each quota period. The objective of periodic adjustments is to maintain a constant rate of landings throughout the remainder of the quota period, without exceeding the quota.

Scup:

- For holders of Scup License Endorsements: 1,200 pounds.
- For Restricted Commercial Fishing License Holders: 60 fish.
- From lobster pots when in possession of lobsters: 10 fish.

Black Sea Bass:

- For holders of Black Sea Bass Endorsements: 10 fish for all gears. A black sea bass license endorsement is required to land sea bass, including from lobster pots.

Summer Flounder:

- 150 pounds.
- Summer Flounder License Endorsement required.

REMINDERS

Atlantic menhaden:

- The possession limit for the harvest of menhaden in Connecticut waters is 12,000 pounds until 90% of the annual quota has been landed.
- For the landing of menhaden from outside of Connecticut Waters: 120,000 pound until 75% of the annual quota is landed then;
- 20,000 pounds until 90% of the quota is landed.
- Once 90% of the 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 landing*, fishermen must notify DEEP Environmental Conservation Police Dispatch by telephone at 860.424-3503 to report:

- Vessel name
- License Holder's name
- Estimated return date and time
- Connecticut port of landing
- Total pounds of Atlantic menhaden onboard

American lobster: The closed season for lobster is September 8 through November 28. The minimum length is 3-3/8 inches.

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

Bluefish: 1,200 pound possession limit effective Jan 1. Adjust limits periodically to maintain a steady monthly landings rate, to prevent in-season closure and land 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 1,200 pounds.

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.) In the **recreational fishery**, there is a 50 crab daily possession limit and possession of egg bearing crabs or crabs from which the eggs have been removed is prohibited. There is no minimum size limit in the recreational fishery.

Smooth dogfish: 50 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.
- For restricted Commercial Fishing License Holders: 3 fish.
- Open seasons are the months of April, July, August, and between Oct 8 and Dec 24. The commercial minimum length is 16 inches.

Weakfish: 100 pound possession limit all year.

Winter flounder: 50 pound or 38 fish possession limit 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.

Please refer to the [Quick Guide to 2016 Connecticut Commercial Fishing Licenses](#) for more information concerning changes to commercial fishery licensing effective January 1, 2016 including both new requirements for license renewal and new opportunities.

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: www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/fishing/saltwater/marinecirc.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.

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