



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

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May 2, 2022

Marine Fisheries Advisory

DMF ADOPTS A JUNE 1 START DATE FOR LIMITED ENTRY COMMERCIAL MENHADEN SEASON

Effective this year, the limited entry commercial menhaden season will not open until June 1. This means vessels may not retain, possess, or land more than 6,000 pounds of menhaden. The state's commercial lobster fishery is a primary consumer of locally caught menhaden. As a result of both inshore availability and overarching closures to protect right whales, the state's commercial lobster fishery does not experience substantial bait demands until late May and early June. In recent years, there has been an opportunistic early season catch of menhaden that has resulted in quota closures during the summertime period limiting the availability of fresh local bait to the lobster fishery later in the year. This season start date is designed to better align the commercial menhaden fishery with local bait demand. Exempt from this season start date are weir fishermen—who may encounter menhaden in their multi-species gear during the spring—and fishery participants fishing under the 6,000-pound limit.

For more information regarding the management of menhaden, please visit our website (www.mass.gov/marinefisheries) or call DMF at 617-626-1520.