



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

251 Causeway Street, Suite 400, Boston, MA 02114

p: (617) 626-1520 | f: (617) 626-1509

www.mass.gov/marinefisheries



CHARLES D. BAKER
Governor

KARYN E. POLITO
Lt. Governor

KATHLEEN A. THEOHARIDES
Secretary

RONALD S. AMIDON
Commissioner

DANIEL J. MCKIERNAN
Director

July 6, 2021

Marine Fisheries Advisory

DIRECTED COMMERCIAL BLACK SEA BASS FISHERY TO OPEN ON JULY 8

The 2021 directed commercial black sea bass fishing season is scheduled to open on Thursday, July 8. During the directed fishing season, open commercial fishing days are Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. The daily possession and landing limit is 400 pounds for pot fishermen and 200 pounds for rod and reel fishermen. These limits apply per permit holder or per vessel, regardless of how many permits are held. Black sea bass pot fishermen are further allowed to set their gear on July 7 to allow for the gear to be hauled on the first open fishing day of the season.

Black sea bass pot fishermen are reminded they may not fish more than 200 pots and all pot gear being fished is to bear valid 2021 black sea bass pot trap tags. Additionally, black sea bass pots must be rigged with an escape vent that measures 2 1/2" diameter, 2" square, or 1" by 5 3/4" and a ghost panel that is at least 3" by 6" fastened to the pot with biodegradable material. Lastly, all buoy lines in the black sea bass pot fishery are to be 3/8" diameter or less, break at 1,700 pounds of tension, and have a weak link with a breaking strength of 600 pounds at the buoy.

On open fishing days during the directed commercial black sea bass season, commercial lobstermen with a sea bass endorsement may retain and land black sea bass caught incidentally in their lobster traps. These fishermen are subject to the 200 pound possession and landing limit provided further that the weight of finfish and whelks retained in their lobster traps does not exceed the weight of lobsters in their possession. The catch of black sea bass by trawlers and weirs are regulated separately and subject to gear-specific seasons, open fishing days, and catch limits.

Commercial fishermen must hold a regulated fishery permit endorsement for black sea bass or black sea bass pots to retain, possess, land, or sell this species in Massachusetts. Commercial fishermen are required to submit monthly trip-level reports by the fifteenth of the following month, even if their permit is not fished. Reports should be sent to DMF Statistics Project, 30 Emerson Avenue, Gloucester, MA 01930. Failure to submit these reports for all months of the year in a timely manner may result in the non-renewal of a commercial permit and its endorsements in 2022. Blank forms and instructions were mailed out prior to the beginning of the 2021 fishing season; additional copies can be obtained on the [Trip Level Reporting website](#).

For an exhaustive set of regulations affecting the black sea bass fishery in Massachusetts, please review 322 CMR 4.13, 6.12, 6.28 and 12.05. For more information about the management of marine fisheries in the Commonwealth, visit our website www.mass.gov/marinefisheries.