



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Division of Marine Fisheries

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### Marine Fisheries Advisory

#### **In-Season Adjustments to the 2021 Commercial Summer Flounder Limits**

In response to quota utilization so far this calendar year, the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) is making the following in-season adjustments to the 2021 commercial fishing limits for summer flounder (see [Declaration](#)):

- **Open Fishing Days.** Effective Sunday, September 26, 2021, commercial fishermen will be allowed to fish for, possess, and land summer flounder seven days per week in Massachusetts through December 31, 2021 unless 100% of the 2021 quota is taken and the fishery is closed. This adjustment adds Friday and Saturday to the open fishing days roughly one month sooner than would otherwise have occurred.
- **Trip Limits.** During the period of Sunday, September 26, 2021 through Saturday, October 9, 2021, the commercial summer flounder possession and landing limit for all gear types will be 800 pounds per calendar day or trip, whichever period is longer. Then beginning on Sunday, October 10, 2021, the summer flounder limit will increase to 2,000 pounds per calendar day or trip, whichever period is longer, through December 31, 2021 unless 100% of the 2021 quota is taken and the fishery is closed. Without these adjustments, the limits would have been 400 pounds for net fishermen and 250 pounds for hook and line fishermen through the end of October and 1,000 pounds during November–December.

The state's commercial summer flounder quota, as allocated by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, was increased from 786,399 pounds in 2020 to 1,015,179 pounds in 2021 (29%). This occurred in response to robust stock conditions and a shift in geographic distribution of the resource to the north and east. However, despite this sizeable quota increase, DMF did not take action to adjust commercial fishing limits at the start of the fishing year, instead favoring to make in-season adjustments in response to fishery performance.

Now, in response to the underutilization of this year's quota, DMF is making in-season adjustments to provide greater access to the quota. These changes should allow all commercial fishermen with greater access to the available quota, promote fishermen safety by allowing vessels—particularly smaller inshore boats—to better choose their fishing days given deteriorating fall weather, incentivize Massachusetts permit holders fishing offshore in federal waters to land their catch in Massachusetts ports, and better align the landing limit (and profitability) to the overhead associated with steaming further from port to target these fish as they seasonally migrate.

For more information about the management of marine fisheries in Massachusetts, contact DMF at 617-626-1520 or visit our website at [www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries).