



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

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Marine Fisheries Advisory

2024 Commercial Horseshoe Crab Bait Fishery to Close Effective Monday, October 21

DMF is projecting that 100% of Massachusetts' 2024 commercial horseshoe crab bait quota of 140,000 crabs will be taken on Sunday, October 20, 2024. Accordingly, the fishery will close effective 0001 hours on Monday, October 21, 2024 ([Closure Notice](#)). Unless otherwise notified the commercial horseshoe crab bait fishery will remain closed until it reopens in 2025.

During the closed period, it is unlawful for commercial fishers to retain, possess, land, or sell horseshoe crabs and for seafood dealers or bait dealers to purchase or receive horseshoe crabs directly from fishers. Exempt from this are biomedical harvesters, biomedical dealers, and biomedical processing firms lawfully participating in the biomedical horseshoe crab fishery, which remains open at this time. Additionally, pot fishers may possess dead horseshoe crabs as bait, provided their documented source of horseshoe crabs is a permitted bait dealer or the horseshoe crabs were previously harvested by the permit holder and held in storage for use as bait.

Commercial fishers must electronically submit any outstanding daily trip-level reports as soon as possible, even if their permit was not fished. Failure to submit these reports in a timely manner may result in the non-renewal of a commercial permit and its endorsements in 2025. Instructions were mailed out prior to the beginning of the 2024 fishing season. Please find more information about reporting electronically [here](#).

For more information about the management of marine fisheries in Massachusetts, visit our website at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries.