



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



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December 21, 2022

Marine Fisheries Advisory

DMF to Increase 2023 Period I Summer Flounder Trip Limit and Renew Multi-State Pilot Program

Period I Trip Limit Increase

The Director of the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF), with approval of the Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission, has increased Massachusetts' 2023 Period I (January 1–April 22) commercial summer flounder possession and landing limit from 3,000 pounds to 10,000 pounds ([Declaration Notice](#)). The Period I fishery is allocated 30% of the state's annual quota. Unless otherwise adjusted, this trip limit shall remain in effect through April 22 or until the period's quota allocation is taken and the possession and landing limit is reduced to 100 pounds. These possession and landing limits apply per trip or per calendar day, whichever period of time is longer.

For 2023, Massachusetts' summer flounder commercial quota is expected to be set at 1.36 million pounds, resulting in a Period I allocation of about 400,000 pounds. The Period I fishery occurs principally offshore in federal waters and this action is designed to encourage permitted vessels to target summer flounder offshore and to land their summer flounder catch in Massachusetts. Doing so may enhance the use of the available annual quota, which has been underutilized since 2019.

Period I Multi-State Pilot Program

DMF is also renewing a pilot program allowing the possession of multiple states' limits of summer flounder and black sea bass during the offshore wintertime fishery. Through this program, vessels permitted to land summer flounder and black sea bass in Massachusetts and any other Atlantic coastal state will be authorized to possess non-confirming quantities of these species when landing in Massachusetts. This allowance is contingent on the vessel properly segregating and labeling the catch destined for each state in which it is permitted, not exceeding the aggregate trip limit for the participating states where permitted, and not offloading more than the applicable landing limit in each state. To participate in this pilot program, a vessel must hold a summer flounder permit endorsement in Massachusetts and a similar permit in another participating state. If a vessel additionally holds a black sea bass permit endorsement in Massachusetts and its equivalent in one of these participating states, the pilot program authorization will also apply to this species. Additionally, the vessel must be equipped with a Vessel Monitoring System as required by NOAA Fisheries.

If you meet these qualifying criteria, you may apply for a Letter of Authorization (LOA) to participate in this pilot program by providing DMF with the following information: (1) permit holder name; (2) vessel name; (3) DMF permit ID number; and (4) vessel documentation number. Please provide this necessary information to the attention of Julia Kaplan via e-mail (julia.kaplan@mass.gov).

Please visit our www.mass.gov/marinefisheries for more information regarding summer flounder.