



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Division of Marine Fisheries

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### Marine Fisheries Advisory

#### **New Menhaden Rules for 2021**

The Division of Marine Fisheries has implemented new rules affecting the state's commercial menhaden fishery when it is conducted under a 6,000-pound trip limit.

1. When fishing at the 6,000-pound limit, fishermen must use a purse seine with a maximum size of 450' long by 48' deep. Net depth is measured by taking the average size of 20 meshes and counting the total number of meshes by depth.
2. All menhaden catch brought aboard the vessel is to be immediately stored in 55-gallon barrels (volume of 7.35 cubic feet) or standard fish totes (volume of 6,525 cubic inches) upon retention.
3. Volume-to-weight equivalencies have been implemented for each container. A level-filled fish tote is the equivalent of 117 pounds of menhaden and a level-filled barrel is 350 pounds of menhaden. Therefore, 51 fish totes or 17 barrels are the equivalent to the 6,000-pound trip limit. Fish totes and barrels may be used interchangeably onboard a vessel with a 3 fish tote to 1 barrel ratio used to determine trip limit compliance.

These rules are designed to enhance the enforcement of and compliance with this trip limit. They apply principally to the Open Entry Quota Managed Fishery. However, commercial harvesters fishing during the Incidental Catch and Small Scale Fishery—which occurs after the annual quota is taken—are also affected, as are any fishermen without a limited entry menhaden permit participating in the Episodic Event Set-Aside Fishery, should Massachusetts opt into this interstate program.

All limited entry fishermen and Episodic Event Set-Aside Fishery participants are required to obtain a bait dealer permit and report their catch into SAFIS as a bait dealer on a nightly basis. Open access fishermen are not subject to this nightly dealer reporting requirement. However, they are reminded that if they are selling menhaden directly to the public then they would need to obtain a bait dealer permit and report all transactions into SAFIS as a bait dealer on a weekly basis. All commercial fishermen, regardless of whether or not they are also reporting as a bait dealer, are additionally required to report their harvest of menhaden on monthly trip level reports. All prospective menhaden fishermen in Massachusetts should have received permit conditions from DMF. These permit conditions describe those requirements affecting fishing with purse seines and reporting purse seine catch and are published on our [website](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries).

Please view our website at [www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries).