



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

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Marine Fisheries Advisory

DMF Modifies its Period II Summer Flounder Pilot Program to Also Allow Trawlers to Possess and Land Consecutive Days Trip Limits of Horseshoe Crabs and Black Sea Bass

For 2020, DMF has renewed the seasonal pilot program that allows commercial fishermen participating in the Period II summertime (June 10 – October 31) summer flounder trawl fishery to land two daily limits of lawfully caught and retained summer flounder over consecutive open commercial fishing days. Effective July 22, DMF has modified this program to similarly allow participating vessels to land two daily trip limits of horseshoe crabs and black sea bass.

This pilot program requires the vessel operator to segregate the first day's catch into a sealed container and provide documentation regarding each day's fishing activity in a DMF issued [logbook](#). This is done to allow trawlers to lay up overnight in ports on the islands south of Cape Cod or at-sea closer to the fishing grounds and fish consecutive calendar days before having to return to port to land their retained catch. In doing so, participants are expected to be able to more efficiently and effectively target available quotas without increasing daily commercial trawl effort in state-waters.

All vessels currently enrolled in the pilot program should have received modified Letters of Authorization via e-mail. If you are not enrolled in the program, instructions for enrollment follow. To be eligible to participate, a fisherman must hold a commercial fisherman permit with regulated fishery permit endorsements for summer flounder and mobile gear (Coastal Access Permit), and the permit must be in good standing. Eligible fishermen must complete a [Declaration to Participate Form](#) and return it to Jared Silva by e-mail (jared.silva@mass.gov), fax (617-626-1509); or mail (Attn: Jared Silva, MA Division of Marine Fisheries, 251 Causeway Street, Suite 400, Boston, MA 02114). Once the form is received and processed, DMF will issue the permit holder a Letter of Authorization and Statement of Permit Conditions allowing participation in this program and setting forth the relevant guidelines. This LOA will also be accompanied by a daily logbook and the uniquely identifiable and sequentially numbered plastic seal tags. These tags are to be applied to the container holding the first day's catch. Please note that there may be delays in processing applications due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

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