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DMF to Continue Commercial Fluke Pilot Program for Weekly Trip Limits, Opening January 1, 2013

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The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (*MarineFisheries*) will continue its pilot Winter-time Fluke Weekly Trip Limit Fishery. Beginning on January 1, 2013 Massachusetts fluke permit endorsement holders may be authorized to land 1,000 lbs of fluke per week provided they have been issued a Letter of Authorization by the Division of Marine Fisheries. The weekly limit is being reduced from 2,000 to 1,000 lbs. in response to the lowering of this year's quota by 11% and last year's premature closure (February 19) of the winter fishery.



Vessels not enrolled in the pilot program must wait until the February 1 opening of the commercial fishery and comply with the 500 lb trip limit [322 CMR 6.22(2)(c)(1)]. The pilot program will remain in effect until 25% of the overall 2013 quota is caught, at which time the commercial fluke trip limit will be reduced to 100 lbs. for the remainder of the winter period. For reporting purposes, a week is considered Sunday through Saturday. The special authorization for a 1,000 lb. weekly landing limit will be enforced through dealer records and Vessel Trip Reports (VTR's).

To obtain a letter of authorization (LOA) to participate in the pilot program, please send a request via fax or e-mail to *MarineFisheries* to the attention of Jared Silva (fax: 617 626-1509 or email: jared.silva@state.ma.us).

Requests must include your vessel name, vessel length, vessel documentation number, commercial fishing permit number, the name of the wholesale dealer that you intend on selling your product to and the specific location where the dealer will receive the fish. Please note the wholesale dealer you identify must report their fluke transactions daily through the SAFIS database.

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