



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

(617) 626-1520 | www.mass.gov/marinefisheries



MAURA T. HEALEY
Governor

KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL
Lt. Governor

REBECCA L. TEPPER
Secretary

THOMAS K. O'SHEA
Commissioner

DANIEL J. MCKIERNAN
Director

October 12, 2023

Marine Fisheries Advisory

2023 COMMERCIAL TAUTOG FISHERY CLOSED EFFECTIVE SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14

DMF is projecting that 100% of Massachusetts' 2023 commercial tautog quota of 55,541 pounds will be taken on Friday, October 13, 2023. Accordingly, the fishery will close effective 0001 hours on Saturday, October 14, 2023 ([Closure Notice](#)). Unless otherwise notified, the commercial tautog fishery will remain closed until it reopens in 2024. During this quota closure period, it is unlawful for any fisher to retain, possess, or land tautog in a manner that does not conform with the state's recreational fishing limits or to offer any tautog for sale, barter, or exchange.

Additionally, seafood dealers are prohibited from purchasing, receiving, or otherwise obtaining tautog from fishers during this quota closure period. However, seafood dealers may continue to possess lawfully purchased tautog provided all tautog are tagged through the operculum with a valid 2023 Tautog ID Tag. Additionally, the following restrictions apply. Effective, Saturday, October 28, 2023, seafood dealers are required to sell off any and all tautog with a 2023 Massachusetts Tautog ID Tag. Then, effective February 28, 2024, all seafood dealers and seafood purveyors are required to liquidate all tautog bearing a 2023 Tautog ID Tag, regardless of state of origin.

In the coming weeks, commercial fishers will receive a letter from DMF describing how to return all unused Tautog ID Tags and the schedule for submitting their Tautog ID Tag Accounting Report. Additionally, commercial fishers are to submit monthly trip-level reports by the fifteenth of the following month, even if their permit was not fished. Reports should be sent to: DMF Statistics Project, 30 Emerson Avenue, Gloucester, MA 01930. Failure to submit these reports for all months of the year in a timely manner may result in the non-renewal of a commercial permit and its endorsements in 2024. Blank forms and instructions were mailed out prior to the beginning of the 2023 fishing season; additional copies can be obtained on the [Trip Level Reporting website](#).

The current recreational fishing limits for tautog are as follows:

Season	Bag Limit*	Size Limit**
January 1 – March 31	0 fish (prohibited)	N/A
April 1 – May 31	3 fish per angler	16" minimum and only one fish may exceed 21"
June 1 – July 31	1 fish per angler	16" minimum
August 1 – October 14	3 fish per angler	16" minimum and only one fish may exceed 21"
October 15 – December 31	5 fish per angler	16" minimum and only one fish may exceed 21"
* Anglers fishing aboard a private vessel are subject to 10-fish tautog limit for the vessel, meaning the most restrictive limit of the per angler bag limit or the per vessel limit applies.		

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