



Fish Dealer Report

License & Statistics Section, PO Box 769, Morehead City, NC 28557

May 2017

2016 COMMERCIAL LANDINGS REVIEW

Based on data collected through the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries Trip Ticket Program, 60 million pounds of finfish and shellfish were landed in 2016, with an estimated dockside value of \$94 million dollars. This represents a 9.1 percent decrease in landings when compared to 2015 and a 1 percent decrease in value. The 2016 landings are higher than the five-year average of 59 million pounds, and the five-year average value of \$86 million dollars.

Thirty-four counties reported landings to the Division of Marine Fisheries Trip Ticket Program in 2016. Dare County had the largest landings, with 16.1 million pounds, followed by Carteret with 8 million, Hyde with 7.9 million, Tyrrell with 4.7 million, and Pamlico with 4.4 million pounds. These five counties accounted for 68.5 percent of the statewide landings, where the remaining 29 accounted for 31.5 percent.

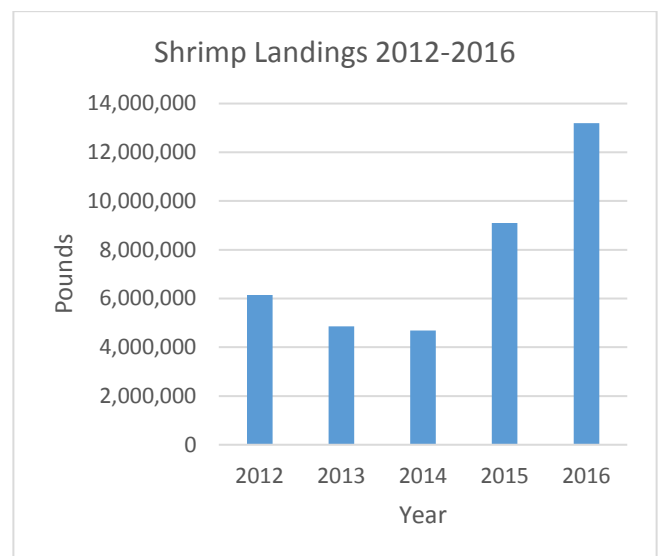
The top five species landed were hard blue crabs (24.7 million pounds), followed by shrimp (13.2 million pounds), spiny dogfish (2.3 million pounds), Atlantic croaker (2.1 million pounds), and summer flounder (2.1 million pounds)

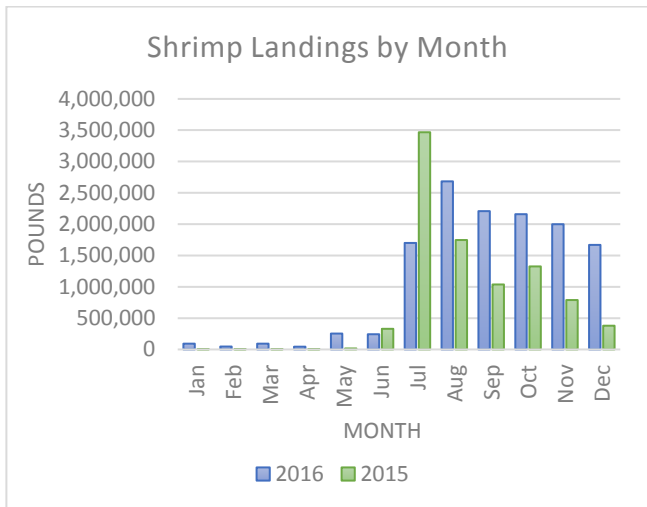
The top five species with landings increases from 2015 to 2016 were tilefish (146 percent), spotted seatrout (97 percent), squid (79 percent), black drum (76 percent), and shrimp (45 percent).

The increase in shrimp landings was aided by a warm fall, which contributed to increased landings well into December. In December 2015, dealers purchased 378,829 pounds of shrimp. By



comparison, in December 2016, dealers purchased 1.7 million pounds. The increase in annual shrimp landings was accompanied by an 18.7 percent increase in overall trips in 2016. Landings from state ocean waters north of Cape Hatteras greatly increased in 2016- 10,993 percent over the previous year. Reports from dealers indicated an abundance of shrimp in northern, nearshore waters, in an area normally avoided by fishermen.





Oysters also saw changes in 2016, with the overall landings increasing 3.6 percent. The higher landings came from a 99.6 percent jump in lease production. Public bottom landings dropped by 25.3 percent. Hurricane Matthew most likely contributed to the poor water quality and closures in the fall that impacted oyster landings from public bottom.

Blue crabs also saw a significant change from last year. Landings of all three blue crab stages decreased. Hard blue crabs, soft blue crabs and peeler blue crabs experienced a 20.4 percent, 25.1 percent and 36.9 percent decrease, respectively. Like the oyster landings, blue crab landings were negatively affected by poor water quality following Hurricane Matthew.

DEALER SURVEY RESULTS

The North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries Trip Ticket Program conducts a survey of fish dealers every two years to obtain input on various aspects of the program. In January 2017, the survey was sent out to every licensed fish dealer in the state. The survey was designed to gauge customer satisfaction, inquire about the dealer's

ability to provide information on personal consumption by fishermen, and to give them the opportunity to relay comments back to the Division of Marine Fisheries. A total dealer count was calculated to be 641 at the time of mailout on Jan. 20. As of April 7, 201 surveys had been returned, representing a response rate of 31 percent, which is 43 percent over the 2014 survey response rate and 31 percent over the past five surveys. The survey responses are anonymous and dealers identified themselves only if they chose to. Some notable highlights are listed below.

The survey results indicate a continuing trend of dealer satisfaction with the Trip Ticket Program. Of the respondents, most agreed or strongly agreed that the Trip Ticket Program allows for easy and accurate data reporting, the program requirements are well explained, supplies are readily available and accessible, and that customer service is satisfactory. Of the dealers who completed the survey, 96 percent had a positive review of the customer service aspects of the Trip Ticket Program and 78 percent said they were satisfied with the service of their commercial port agent. Sixty-three percent had positive reviews of the quality of data collected by the Trip Ticket Program, where 29 percent had negative reviews, and 8 percent abstained from answering. The Trip Ticket Program will be sending out annual landings data, to those who indicated they wanted to see them on the survey, starting in May. and contacting various dealers who requested to the Trip Ticket Program extends a big thank you to all dealers who responded to the survey. The program relies on this feedback to guide future efforts.

The Division of Marine Fisheries is dedicated to ensuring sustainable marine and estuarine fisheries and habitats for the benefit and health of the people of North Carolina.

RULE CHANGES

Several new rules will go into effect May 1, including six to implement amendments to the Oyster and Hard Clam fishery management plans. Of particular interest to dealers may be amendments to 15A NCAC 03K .0202 to reduce the culling tolerance for oysters from 10 percent to 5 percent for the possession of accumulated dead shell, oyster cultch material, a shell length less than that specified by proclamation, or in any combination for oysters possessed from public bottom.

Also, changes to 15A NCAC 03J .0104, 15A NCAC 03L .0102, 15A NCAC 03O .0501 and 15A NCAC 03O .0503 establish a Permit for Weekend Trawling for Live Shrimp. Permit conditions include headrope length, live tank and aeration requirements. Commercial fishermen who wish to participate in this weekend fishery may contact [Michelle Hensley](mailto:Michelle.Hensley@ncdenr.gov) at 252-808-8076 or Michelle.Hensley@ncdenr.gov to receive a permit application package.

Another rule change to 15A NCAC 03O .0503 proposes to relocate the long-standing 2003 requirement for a permit for dealers transacting in spiny dogfish from proclamation into rule. Spiny dogfish are monitored under a quota and dealers are required to report daily landings during the open season. Placing the permit requirement in rule has no real impact on holders of the permit as the reporting requirements, application process, and cost of the permit will not change. Text of the rule changes will be posted on the Division website on May 1 in a rulebook supplement dated May 1, 2017. For more information on the rule changes, contact [Catherine Blum](mailto:Catherine.Blum@ncdenr.gov) at 252-808-8014 or Catherine.Blum@ncdenr.gov.

ESTUARINE GILL NET PERMIT

The Division of Marine Fisheries requires fishermen to obtain an Estuarine Gill Net Permit for any anchored small or large mesh fishing operation in internal coastal waters. The permit is a requirement of federal incidental take permits for sea turtles and Atlantic sturgeon. A condition of the incidental take permits is to maintain certain levels of observer coverage statewide. The Estuarine Gill Net Permit requires fishermen to provide an active phone number where they can be reached to schedule observer trips so that the division can maintain the observer coverage needed to stay in compliance with the incidental take permits. If the required coverage is not maintained, large and small mesh anchored gill nets could be prohibited in all Internal Coastal Waters. To date for fiscal year 2017, there have been 2,556 permits issued. Fishermen can obtain or renew their annual permit when they renew their license at division offices or via mail.

The License Program is now printing Estuarine Gill Net Permits on clean release cards instead of only providing the proof of purchase on standard size printer paper. These permits are now the same size as the Standard Commercial Fishing License and should make it easier for fishermen to keep the permit on them while fishing.

STAFF CHANGES

The Division of Marine Fisheries License and Statistics Section has undergone a few staffing changes in the past year that we wish to bring to your attention.

Adam Stemle is the new Division of Marine Fisheries economist. Adam joins us from the

The Division of Marine Fisheries is dedicated to ensuring sustainable marine and estuarine fisheries and habitats for the benefit and health of the people of North Carolina.

University of Miami. Questions for Adam can be directed to:
Adam.Stemle@ncdenr.gov or 252-808-8107

Chris Kelly is the new port agent for the Northern District. Chris comes to the program after working for the division's gill net crew in Elizabeth City. Questions can be directed to:
Chris.Kelly@ncdenr.gov or 252-264-3911

Amanda Tong is the new data analyst in the Morehead City office. Amanda comes to us from the Department of Environmental Conservation for the state of New York, and will be handling data requests and data management. She can be reached at:
Amanda.Tong@ncdenr.gov or 252-808-8020

LICENSE SALES UPDATED

Below are sales as of April 21, by license type for the 2017 (July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017) license year. The values below include active licenses only. Totals do not include transfers, replacements, or voids.

Standard Commercial Fishing License	5,142
Retired Standard Commercial Fishing License	1,323
Commercial Fishing Vessel Registration	7,775
Land or Sell License	102
NC Resident Shellfish License Without SCFL	1,110
Fish Dealer License	713
Ocean Pier License	20
Recreational Fishing Tournament License	19
Recreational Commercial Gear License	1,927
Total Licenses for All License Types	18,131

*Data not finalized in time for printing

TECH TIPS

The following are tips designed to help electronic dealers enter data on their trip tickets faster and with less hassle.

Tab and Type

Push the mouse aside. Use the Tab key to take you from field to field. Located at the top of several drop-down lists is a blank space for the search and type-ahead feature.

Use enter key instead of mouse click

If a button that you need to click becomes highlighted with a dotted box just inside the button box (because you tabbed to it), hit the Enter key. Hitting Enter when the button is highlighted is the same as clicking on the button with the mouse.

New Ticket

If you are ready to enter another trip ticket, you do not have to leave the Trip Ticket screen. To bring up a new Trip Ticket screen, hold down the Ctrl button and hit the N key. This is a hot key sequence that can also be accessed from the Trip Ticket screen menu by clicking on the "New" menu item.

If you have any questions regarding use of the Trip Ticket software, please contact Grace Kemp at Grace.Kemp@ncdenr.gov or 252-808-8101

NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2016

May 17-18: Bridgepointe Hotel and Marina, New Bern

August 16-17: Doubletree by Hilton - Raleigh
Brownstone-University Hotel,
Raleigh

November 15-16: Hilton Garden Inn, Kitty Hawk

*Listen to MFC Meetings live via online streaming. See division website for details:
<http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/mfc-meetings>

The Division of Marine Fisheries is dedicated to ensuring sustainable marine and estuarine fisheries and habitats for the benefit and health of the people of North Carolina.