



Future Fishing, Seafood Industry Leaders Sought

A one-year program to develop new leaders in the state's fishing and seafood industry is being spearheaded by Louisiana Sea Grant. The application process for the Fisheries & Seafood Leadership Program (FSLP) opened this week (March 1).

"This program is perfect for emerging leaders in the seafood industry," said Julie Falgout, Louisiana Sea Grant seafood industry liaison. "Boat owners and captains, deckhands, docks and processors, individuals in the insurance and finance industries, fisheries managers – anyone interested in helping our state's seafood industry navigate the coming decades – should apply."

FSLP's first class will begin in the fall and graduate in Summer 2024. Participants will learn about:

- Leadership skill building
- Effective communication
- Emerging technologies
- Business and marketing trends
- Commodity policy issues
- National, state and community-level public policies
- Economic development

FSLP tuition is \$200, but scholarships may be available. Members of the first cohort will be announced in May.

"This program has been in the planning stages since before the pandemic," said Falgout. "We're excited about providing this opportunity to help our fishing industry become more resilient and advocate for their needs."

For more information, contact Falgout at Jfalgout@agcenter.lsu.edu, (985) 856-2477 or visit www.laseagrant.org/outreach/fslp/.

Program sponsors also are being sought.

NOAA Gear Monitoring Team Spring 2023 Turtle Excluder Device Outreach, Courtesy Inspection Schedule

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Gear Monitoring Team (GMT) released the following schedule for their Turtle Excluder Device (TED) outreach and courtesy inspections for Louisiana.

- **March 13, 2023, to March 17, 2023**

Western Coastal Louisiana – Cameron Parish, Vermilion Parish, Iberia Parish and St. Mary Parish

- **March 27, 2023, to March 31, 2023**

Central Coastal Louisiana – Terrebonne Parish and Lafourche Parish

- **April 17, 2023, to April 21, 2023**

Eastern Coastal Louisiana – Jefferson Parish, Plaquemines Parish and St. Bernard Parish

To increase the productivity and efficiency of the team, NOAA is asking that those interested in participating in these TED outreach and courtesy inspection events reach out in advance. By doing this, NOAA can schedule accordingly and ensure that everyone who needs these services while they are in the area can be helped. Contact NOAA at the following numbers or email addresses for more information on when and where the GMT will be. NOAA can let you know how to get your TED inspected or answer your questions.

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ted.info@noaa.gov

Summary: January 2023 Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Meeting

Gray Triggerfish

The council took final action on a framework action to modify the gray triggerfish commercial trip limit. The council chose to increase the trip limit to 25 fish. The gray triggerfish annual catch limit was increased in 2021 and the commercial sector did not harvest its annual catch target in 2022 under the 16-fish trip limit. Increasing the trip limit should provide commercial fishermen the opportunity to land the commercial annual catch target, reduce discards and help achieve optimum yield. The framework action will be transmitted to the Secretary of Commerce for approval and implementation as soon as practicable.

For-Hire Trip Declaration Requirements

The council took final action on an abbreviated framework action to modify for-hire trip declaration requirements. Vessels with federal charter vessel/headboat permits for Reef Fish and/or Coastal Migratory Pelagics are currently required to submit a trip declaration (hail-out) anytime the vessel moves on the water. The council considered feedback from stakeholders and chose to require federally permitted vessels to only submit trip declarations for trips that will be engaging in any type of fishing or chartered activity. The framework action will be transmitted to the Secretary of Commerce for approval and implementation as soon as practicable.

Gray Snapper

The council was presented with results of the most recent gray snapper stock assessment (SEDAR 75 2022), which showed that gray snapper is not overfished or experiencing overfishing. The council's Scientific and Statistical Committee provided updated recommendations to the gray snapper overfishing limit and acceptable biological catch. The council decided to initiate work on a document that will increase the gray snapper catch limits and convert them to the updated recreational landings using the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey (MRIP-FES) data units.

Red Grouper

The council was presented with the results of a red grouper interim analysis, which is used to track trends in abundance based on the NMFS bottom longline survey. The interim analysis is performed to provide an update on stock health between stock assessments, and when warranted, used to modify catch advice. The red grouper interim analysis was reviewed by the council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). The SSC noted that the index of abundance is relatively unchanged in the last ten years, and biomass levels remain low. As a result, the SSC did not recommend any changes to the catch limits. A full stock assessment for red grouper is set to begin in 2024.

Commercial Individual Fishing Quota Program

The council heard a final report on its Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program Focus Group which was tasked with reviewing the current IFQ programs' goals and objectives and recommending the replacement or retention of those goals and objectives. The focus group worked to define the changes needed to improve the red snapper and grouper-tilefish IFQ programs to address minimizing discards, fairness and equity, and new entrant issues. The council also heard a presentation on Adaptive Catch Shares which cyclically reallocates shares to active participants in the fishery, and received a presentation from NOAA Fisheries outlining other potential changes to the program. The council decided to conduct a review of the IFQ program goals and objectives and initiate an amendment to address program changes by the June 2023 council meeting.

Gag Grouper

The council continued work on Reef Fish Amendment 56, which considers revising catch limits, sector allocation, rebuilding timeline and the recreational fishing season for gag. The most recent stock assessment (SEDAR 72 2022) determined that gag is overfished and undergoing overfishing. Additionally, the assessment identified that the proportion of males in the population is less than two percent, which negatively affects the stock's ability to reproduce. The council is obligated to end overfishing and develop a rebuilding plan by 2024 for gag, which will dramatically reduce catch limits during the beginning of the rebuilding period. During this meeting, the council edited the alternatives in the document by removing consideration of a 19-year rebuilding timeline and removing consideration of a recreational fishing season with an opening date of Nov. 1. The council plans to host a series of public hearings along the west coast of Florida in Destin, Cedar Key, Tampa and Naples, along with a virtual hearing before taking final action on this document during the council's June 2023 meeting.

In recognition that further management modifications may be necessary to constrain gag harvest to newly anticipated catch limits, the council initiated work on a document that will consider lowering the recreational bag limit and establishing a recreational vessel limit for gag and black grouper; and, adding additional spatial areas to protect spawning gag.

Greater Amberjack

During this meeting, the council began work on a Framework Action that considers modifying the recreational closed season and the commercial trip limit. These changes are being considered to ensure that harvest is constrained to newly recommended catch limits set to allow the greater amberjack stock to rebuild. The council added a new alternative that would create a seven-fish commercial trip limit and decided not to consider modifying management measures for the entire jacks complex, which includes lesser amberjack, banded rudderfish, and almaco jack.

Red Snapper Data Calibration Ratios

Private recreational red snapper seasons are monitored using MRIP in concert with landings data collected from Gulf state data collection programs. The state-specific annual catch limits were set using calibration ratios developed by the Gulf States and NOAA's Office of Science and Technology and approved by the Council in 2020. Those calibration ratios convert state survey data to MRIP's Coastal Household Telephone Survey data units (the predecessor to MRIP-FES). Using the recommendations from its SSC, the council decided to begin work on a framework action to update the recreational red snapper data calibration ratios for Florida, Alabama and Mississippi. The council plans to begin work on this document at a future meeting.

Electronic Logbook Commercial Reporting

The council continued to work on a joint amendment with the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council that considers requiring federal commercial reef fish and coastal migratory pelagic permit holders to submit logbooks electronically, rather than mailing paper logbooks. The council heard support for the transition to electronic reporting from its Reef Fish and Coastal Migratory Pelagic Advisory Panels and will hear from its Data Collection Advisory Panel during its April 2023 meeting. The council plans to conduct a mailout to permit holders followed by virtual public hearings before taking final action during the June 2023 council meeting.

Request for Comment: Proposed Temporary Rule to Implement Interim Measures to Reduce Overfishing of Gag in the Gulf of Mexico

NOAA Fisheries requested comments on a Proposed Temporary Rule that would implement interim measures under the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) to reduce overfishing of gag. These changes are based on the results of the most recent stock assessment and the recommendations of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's (Council) Scientific and Statistical Committee.

The stock assessment used updated data, including data from the Marine Recreational Information Program Fishing Effort Survey, which replaced the Marine Recreational Information Program Coastal Household Telephone Survey. The stock assessment concluded that the population of Gulf of Mexico gag is too low (overfished) and that too many gag are being caught (overfishing is occurring).

This proposed temporary rule would reduce the current catch limits for Gulf gag as specified in Table 1:

www.fisheries.noaa.gov/bulletin/request-comments-proposed-temporary-rule-implement-interim-measures-reduce-overfishing

Table 1: Current and proposed annual catch limits (ACL) and annual catch targets (ACT) for Gulf gag. All numbers are in pounds gutted weight.

	Stock ACL	Commercial ACL	Recreational ACL	Commercial ACT/Quota	Recreational ACT
Current*	3,120,000	1,217,000	1,903,000	939,000	1,708,000
Proposed*	661,901	258,000	403,759	199,000	362,374

**Note that the “Current” and “Proposed” catch limits cannot be directly compared. This is due to the fact that “Current” recreational catch is estimated using the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS), while the “Proposed” recreational catch limits are estimated using the MRIP-Fishing Effort Survey (FES). MRIP-FES estimates of effort and catch are substantially higher than MRIP-CHTS estimates.*

- The proposed temporary rule would change the dates of the gag recreational fishing season as follows:
 - The gag season opening date would change from June 1, 2023, to Sept. 1, 2023.
 - The gag season will close on Nov. 10, 2023, unless NOAA Fisheries projects that the gag recreational ACL will be harvested prior to that date, in which case, NOAA fisheries would close the fishery to recreational gag harvest as of the projected date.
- This proposed temporary rule would be effective for 180 days. NOAA Fisheries may extend the rule for an additional 186 days (366 days total).
- The reduction in harvest and modification of the recreational fishing season is necessary to reduce overfishing of gag in 2023 while maximizing the amount of fishing days. This is being done due to development of a rebuilding plan for the Gulf gag stock, which will reduce the overfishing limit, acceptable biological catch, ACLs, and ACTs, which is anticipated to be implemented in early 2024.

Information on King and Spanish Mackerel Harvested in State-Permitted Tournaments in the South Atlantic, Mid-Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico

NOAA Fisheries recently received questions about king and Spanish mackerel harvested in a state-permitted tournament. Federal regulations require that king and Spanish mackerel harvested in a state-permitted tournament in the South Atlantic, Mid-Atlantic, or the Gulf of Mexico may not be sold for profit but may be donated to a state dealer or federal dealer (50 C.F.R. § 622.386(e)).

A dealer who accepts these tournament-caught king or Spanish mackerel must be permitted and must comply with all transfer and reporting requirements. A federally permitted dealer who accepts donated king or Spanish mackerel from a state-permitted tournament can first receive these fish from a non-federally permitted vessel.

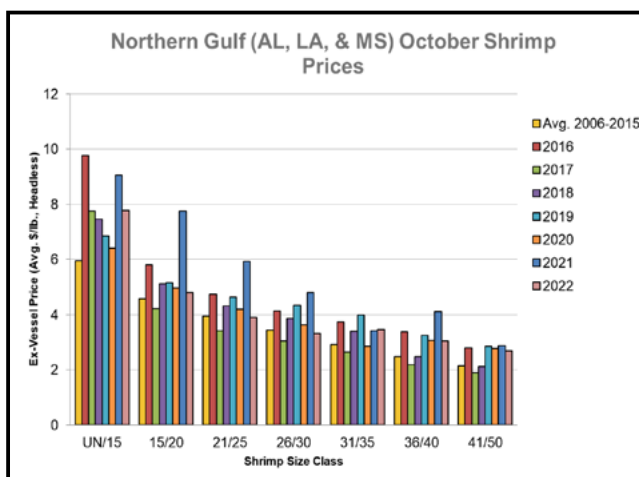
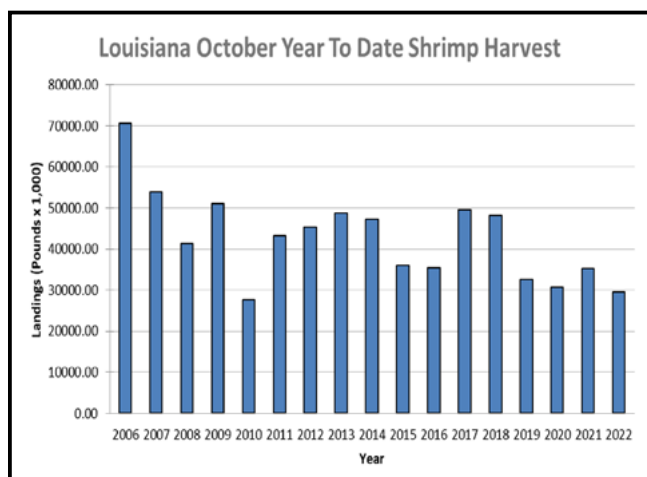
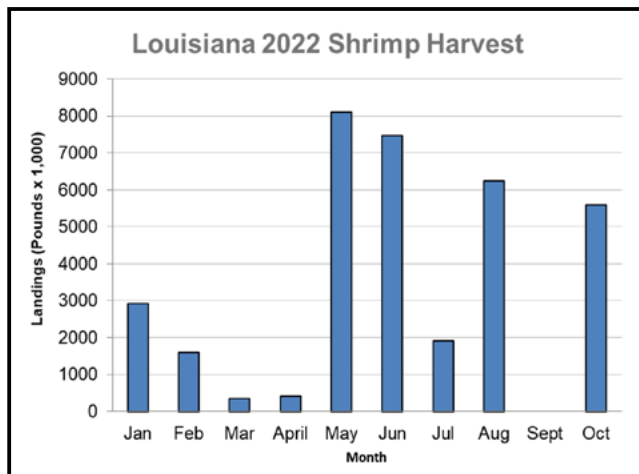
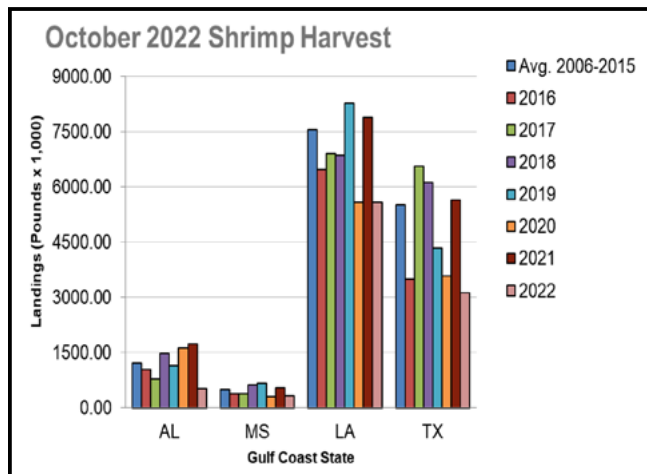
Dealers must donate the monetary value (sale price or cash equivalent of value received for the landings) from the sale of tournament-caught fish to a charitable organization, as determined by the state. The monetary value received from the sale of tournament-caught fish may not be used to pay for tournament expenses.

In addition, the fish must be handled and iced according to the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point standards, and dealers must report tournament-caught king and Spanish mackerel as “tournament catch” and comply with all Federal and State reporting requirements.

Please contact NOAA Fisheries, Southeast Regional Office at 727-824-5305 with any questions.

Louisiana Shrimp Watch

Shrimp Watch data is back, but there are some changes to the Monthly Gulf Coast Shrimp Statistics report passed by NOAA Fisheries. Changes were being made to make the report more consistent and reliable. All landing data will be based on trip ticket data provided by Gulf States and no estimations will be made.



Important Dates & Upcoming Events

March 14, 2023: Oyster Task Force Meeting, Baton Rouge, LA

March 15, 2023: Finfish Task Force Meeting, Baton Rouge, LA

March 22, 2023: Shrimp Task Force Meeting, Houma, LA

March 28, 2023: Crab Task Force Meeting, Houma, LA

THE GUMBO POT

CAJUN-SPICED CATFISH FILLETS*

Recipe courtesy of *Louisiana Kitchen & Culture*.

For more recipes or to subscribe to their magazine or free newsletter, please visit <http://louisiana.kitchenandculture.com/>



Ingredients:

- 4 catfish fillets, 6-8 oz (185-250 g) each
- 5 Tbsp (3 fl oz/80 ml) extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for coating Cajun Spice Rub (below)
- 1 strip applewood-smoked bacon, finely diced
- 8 handfuls baby spinach leaves or baby arugula leaves
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp red wine vinegar
- ½ - 1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Cajun Spice Rub:

This rub adds contrasting color and a spicy taste to mild white catfish. The salt in the rub helps the spices to penetrate the flesh of the fish and imbue it with flavor.

To make this rub, in a small bowl, combine:

- 1 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 Tbsp sweet Hungarian paprika
- 1 tsp fennel seeds, toasted and ground
- 1 tsp dried thyme, crumbled.

Makes enough to coat 4 large fish fillets.

Method:

Place the catfish filets in a glass or ceramic dish and coat them on both sides with oil. Spread a scant teaspoonful of the spice rub on both sides of each fillet, coating the filets evenly. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes.

Coat a large, heavy, oven proof frying pan with oil and heat over medium-high heat until the oil shimmers. Add the catfish and cook until opaque throughout, about 2 minutes on each side. Transfer the pan to a low (200°F/95°C) oven to keep the fish warm.

In a separate nonreactive frying pan over medium heat, cook the bacon until crisp. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the bacon to paper towels to drain.

Place the greens in a large bowl. Add the 5 Tbsp oil to the pan with the bacon fat and heat until the surface shimmers. Add the garlic and sauté until barely golden, about 1 minute.

Remove the pan from the heat. Add the vinegar and ½ Tbsp lemon juice, stir, and pour over the greens in the bowl. Toss well to wilt the greens. Season with salt, black pepper, and additional lemon juice, to taste.

Quickly divide the greens among 4 warmed plates, top each with a catfish filet, and sprinkle with ¼ of the cooked bacon. Serve at once.

*Serves 4

Be sure to visit the *Lagniappe* blog for additional news and timely events between issues.
<https://louisianalagniappe.wordpress.com/>

Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter

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We would like to hear from you! Please contact us regarding fishery questions, comments or concerns you would like to see covered in the Lagniappe. Anyone interested in submitting information, such as articles, editorials or photographs pertaining to fishing or fisheries management is encouraged to do so.

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