

NMFS News Release



**Northeast Regional Office
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930**

Management Measures for the Scup Fishery

Date: August 29, 1996

Dear Vessel Permit Holder:

On September 23, 1996, management measures for the scup (porgy) fishery in the EEZ north of 3515.3' N. latitude -- the latitude of Cape Hatteras Light, Cape Hatteras, North Carolina -- will become effective. As you read this, please note that the **effective date** for some provisions is September 23, 1996, others is January 1, 1997. This letter is a **summary** of the approved measures and requirements contained in the FMP, and does not contain information on every regulation.

Beginning January 1, 1997, in order to fish in the EEZ for scup, you must obtain a permit. For **commercial** vessels, the permits will be issued only to qualifying vessels. The qualifying criteria are:

- (1) The vessel landed and sold scup between January 26, 1988, and January 26, 1993; or
- (2) The vessel is replacing such a vessel and meets the replacement restrictions.

We are currently identifying qualifying vessels through the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) weighout database. Your annual permit renewal application will contain further information about what you can do to apply for, and receive, one of these permits.

Party/charter permits are open to all party and charter boats, but you may not sell the scup you catch. Vessel **operators** must obtain a permit, but if you or your vessel's operator already have one from another federally permitted fishery, you do not need to get another one.

Vessel **reporting requirements** similar to those of other federally permitted fisheries are effective January 1, 1997. Moratorium permit holders must submit daily log reports for all trips. Party/charter permit holders carrying passengers for hire must submit daily log reports for each trip that lands scup, *unless* they also have a moratorium permit for summer flounder, scup, or Atlantic mackerel, squids or butterfish, or any permit for

the multispecies or sea scallop, in which case a log report is required for all trips. Dealers must submit weekly reports of all fish purchases and annual reports of the "Employment Data" section of the Annual Processed Products Reports. If you did not fish, or purchase fish, during a month, you still have to submit a "negative" report. If you are already submitting reports, continue to do so, and additional ones are not necessary.

The FMP specifies a **coastwide commercial quota** for January 1, 1997. Landings made in any state from Maine through North Carolina by commercial vessels will count towards this quota. In the event that this quota is harvested, federally permitted vessels could not fish commercially for, or land, scup harvested in or from the EEZ.

Management measures effective September 23, 1996, include minimum **fish sizes** for the recreational fishery (7 inches (17.8 cm) total length (TL)) and the commercial fishery (9 inches (22.9 cm) TL). Dealers may not possess scup harvested in or from the EEZ that do not meet the commercial size. The minimum **mesh size** for otter trawl vessels is a codend mesh of 4 inches (10.2 cm) for those vessels possessing 4,000 or more pounds (1,814 or more kg) of scup on board. If you possess less than this amount, and are fishing with nets smaller than the minimum mesh size, you must keep the scup separate from other species. The **rollers** on roller rig trawl gear can be no larger than 18 inches (45.7 cm) in diameter. Scup **pots and traps** fished in the EEZ must have hinges and fasteners made of degradable materials, and escape vents that meet the following requirements: square -- each side a minimum of 2.25 inches (5.7 cm); circular -- a minimum of 3.1 inches (7.9 cm) in diameter; or rectangular -- any side of which is not less than 2.25 inches (5.7 cm).

The following measures are not currently specified, but may be adopted for 1997: season and area closures (restrictions) for the commercial fishery, gear restrictions other than those currently in place, recreational possession limit set from a range of 0-50 scup, and recreational season.

You are encouraged to obtain further information or a copy of the regulations by calling (508)281-9278.



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