

NOAA FISHERIES

Each year NOAA Fisheries releases its annual summary report on U.S. recreational and commercial fishery landings.

U.S. Fisheries Facts

U.S. commercial fishermen landed 9.4 billion pounds of seafood valued at \$5.6 billion.

Dutch Harbor, Alaska and New Bedford, Massachusetts remain the top commercial fishing ports.

Marine recreational anglers took 194 million trips and caught 956 million fish, 64 percent of which were released.

Fisheries of the United States, 2018

A Statistical Snapshot of 2018 Fish Landings

ABOUT THE REPORT

Each year NOAA Fisheries compiles key fisheries statistics from the previous year into an annual snapshot documenting fishing's importance to the nation. The 2018 report provides landings totals for both domestic recreational and commercial fisheries by species and allows us to track important indicators such as annual seafood consumption and the productivity of top fishing ports. These statistics provide valuable insights, but to fully understand the overall condition of our fisheries, they must be looked at in combination with other biological, social, and economic factors of ecosystem and ocean health.

SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES, JOBS, AND THE ECONOMY

Both commercial and recreational fisheries play an enormous role in the U.S. economy. In 2018, U.S. commercial fishermen landed 9.4 billion pounds of seafood valued at \$5.6 billion. Recreational anglers made 194 million marine recreational fishing trips with a catch of 956 million fish and landings of 347 million fish (359 million pounds). Fish processors, icehouses, restaurants, grocery stores, bait and tackle shops, fuel stations, and many other businesses benefit from healthy commercial and recreational fishing.

HEALTHY STOCKS MEAN HEALTHY ECONOMIES

Maintaining high commercial fish landings and values and high participation levels in recreational fisheries is good news for fishermen, fishing communities, and for the Americans who want sustainable, healthy U.S. seafood and rewarding outdoor recreational experiences. We are seeing that responsible management has resulted in continued, steady high landings and values of U.S. fisheries over the last five years. This is the payoff from the collective progress that our agency, the eight regional fishery management councils, and our stakeholders have made, working together to ensure the sustainability and economic stability of our nation's fisheries. Additional information on the economic impacts of commercial and recreational fishing can be found in the companion publication Fisheries Economics of the United States (FEUS).



Regional Highlights

Alaska led all states in both volume and value of landings, decreasing 10 percent in volume and increasing 1 percent in value. In the Mid-Atlantic, volume increased by 1 percent and value decreased by 7 percent. In the Gulf of Mexico region, landings increased 11 percent and value increased by less than 4 percent.

Top 5 States

By Volume of Commercial Landings:

Alaska (5.4 billion pounds)

1. Louisiana (1.0 billion pounds)
2. Washington (590.4 million pounds)
3. Virginia (362.5 million pounds)
4. Mississippi (320.3 million pounds)

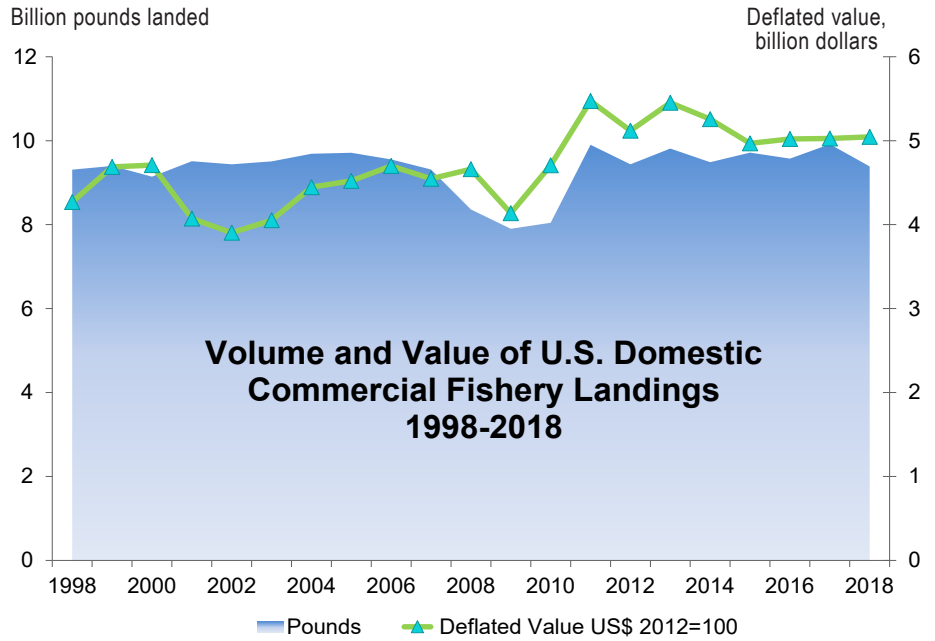
By Value of Commercial Landings:

1. Alaska (\$1.8 billion)
2. Massachusetts (\$647.2 million)
3. Maine (\$587.4 million)
4. Louisiana (\$377.1 million)
5. Washington (\$346.4 million)

Commercial Fisheries and the Seafood Industry

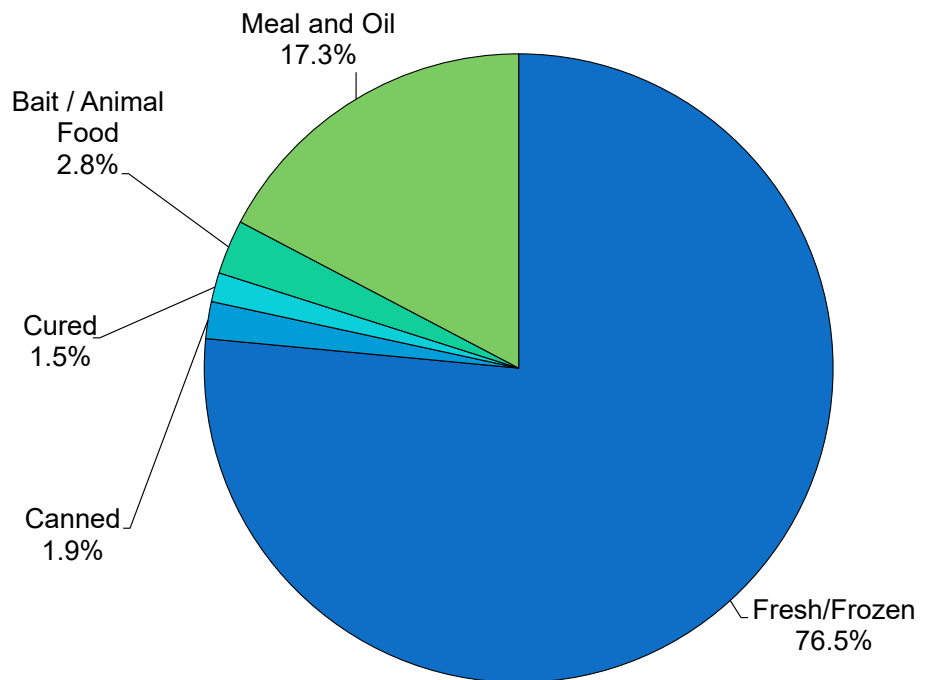
COMMERCIAL FISHERIES LANDINGS

U.S. commercial fishermen landed 9.4 billion pounds of fish and shellfish in 2018 valued at \$5.6 billion. These figures represent a decrease in volume (5.3%) and an increase in value (2.8%) over 2017.



USES OF U.S. DOMESTIC COMMERCIAL LANDINGS

While most fish caught in the United States is consumed as seafood, approximately 17 percent of the 2018 catch was used for other products such as pet food, fish meal, and oil.



TOP U.S. COMMERCIAL FISHING PORTS

For the 22nd consecutive year, Dutch Harbor, Alaska led the nation as the port with the highest volume of seafood landed (763 million pounds valued at \$182 million). Alaska pollock (walleye) made up 91.1 percent of the volume and 52.0 percent of the value. High-value snow crabs and king crabs accounted for an additional 33 percent of the value of Dutch Harbor landings and 1.9 percent of the volume. For the 19th consecutive year, New Bedford, Massachusetts had the highest valued catch (114 million pounds valued at \$431 million), due in large part to the highly valued sea scallop fishery. Sea scallops account for 85 percent of the value of landings in New Bedford.

**SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD**

Americans consumed 5.2 billion pounds of seafood in 2018. The U.S. is the world's second largest consumer of seafood after China, according to data from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

The average American ate 16.1 pounds of fish and shellfish in 2018, an increase of 0.1 pounds from 2017. The USDA's Dietary Guidelines for Americans (<https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/>) recommend that people eat two 4 oz servings of seafood each week. This would be 26 pounds per year for an individual.

FRESH FACTS, SMART SEAFOOD

When consumers go to the market for seafood, they can be assured that if the species is harvested in the United States, it has been caught or farmed responsibly. NOAA Fisheries provides the public with easy-to-understand, science-based facts at FishWatch.gov to help them make smart, sustainable seafood choices. FishWatch delivers regularly updated information on how U.S. seafood is harvested under regulations that keep the environment healthy, fish populations thriving, and our seafood industry on the job.

**What's behind some of the changes?**

Landings of some species went up and some went down. For example, Alaska (walleye) pollock decreased 1% to 3.4 billion pounds, valued at \$451 million (up 9%). Landings of menhaden increased by 12 percent to 1.6 billion pounds, a new record for the species. Pacific hake (whiting) decreased 11 percent to 687 million pounds.

Additionally, Atlantic loligo squid landings were 25.5 million pounds (up 42%). Conversely, Pacific loligo squid landings decreased to 80 million pounds (down 42%). Notable changes also include salmon with landings of 576 million pounds (down 43%) and American lobster landings of 146 million pounds (up 10%).

Overall, the total volume of landings decreased by 5.3 percent (531 million pounds) and landings value increased by 2.8 percent (\$150 million) from the 2017 level.

Recreational Fisheries

RECREATIONAL FISHERIES LANDINGS

Recreational anglers took 194 million trips and caught 956 million fish in 2018. Of the total number of fish caught, 64 percent were released alive. The estimated total weight of landed catch (347 million fish) was 359 million pounds.

Striped bass remains the top species harvested by weight among saltwater anglers, with 24 million pounds (2.5 million fish) harvested in 2018 while scup was the top species harvested by numbers (14 million fish weighing 13 million pounds). In terms of total catch (harvested and released), anglers caught 60 million spotted seatrout (weight not available for total catch). These numbers do not include fish caught for bait.

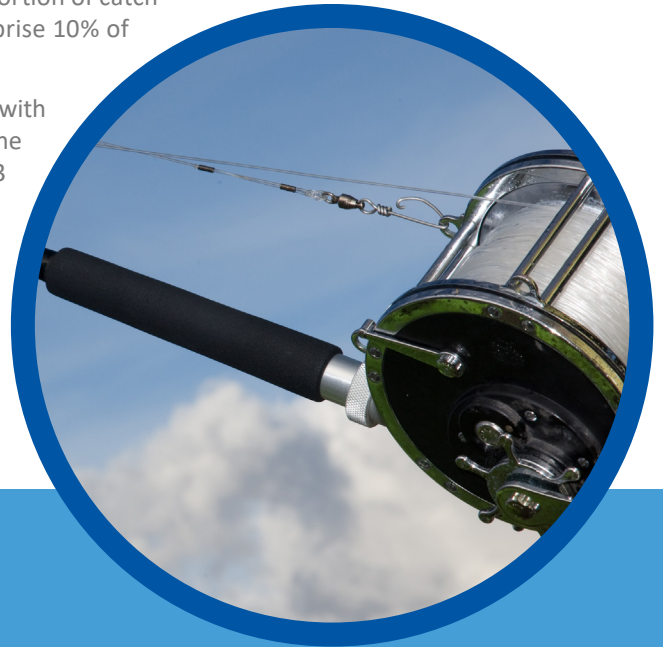
HARVEST AND EFFORT

Harvest and effort have decreased over the past 5 years, while the proportion of catch released continues to rise. Spotted seatrout and Atlantic croaker comprise 10% of the total catch nationally.

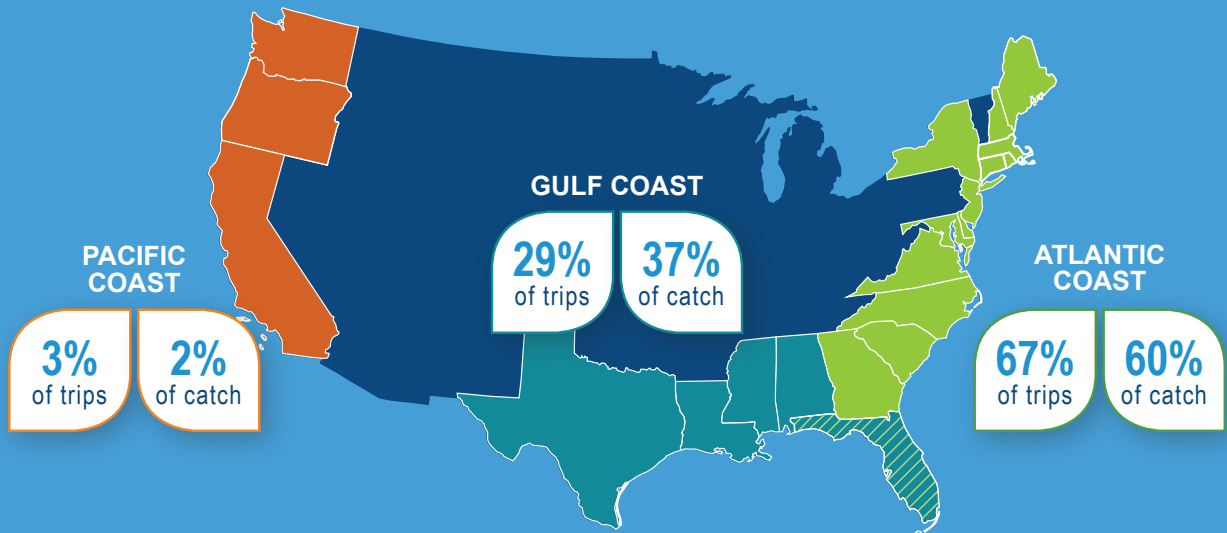
The majority of recreational fishing trips were taken on the Atlantic coast with 67 percent of trips and 60 percent of catch coming from this region. The Gulf coast comprised 29 percent of trips and 37 percent of catch, while 3 percent of trips and 2 percent of catch were from the Pacific coast (Alaska data for 2018 were not available). As in previous years, Florida is the state with the largest recreational harvest (181 million fish weighing 141.7 million pounds), the largest number of anglers fishing (5.4 million), and the largest number of angler trips (85 million).

Where Our Recreational Catch Comes From

- 55% Estuaries
- 35% State territorial seas
- 10% Federal waters (EEZ)



REGIONAL TRIP AND CATCH TOTALS*

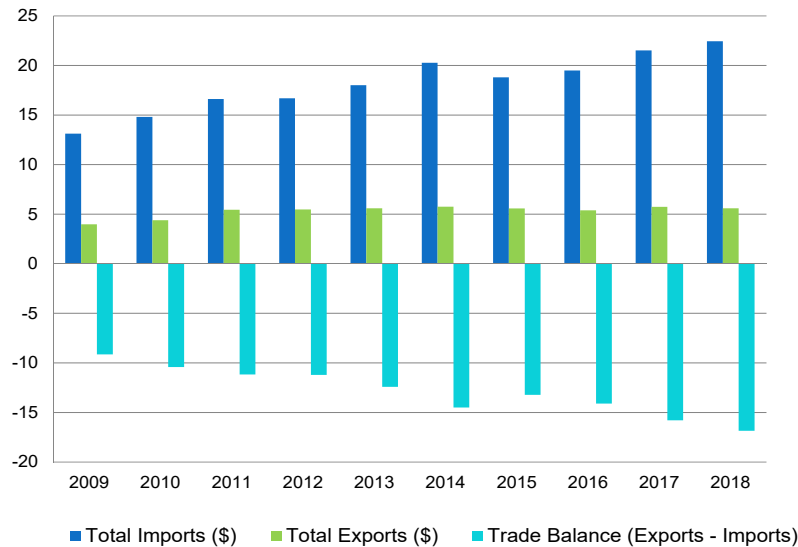


*Alaska data not available for 2018. Hawaii contributed 2% and 1% of national trips and catch, respectively. Puerto Rico data not available for 2018.

Imports and Exports

To meet consumer demand, the United States continues to be a major importer of seafood. Between 85 percent and 95 percent of the seafood consumed in the United States (by edible weight) is imported. This measure has been rising in recent years reflecting an increase in imported seafood. However, a significant portion of this imported seafood is caught by American fishermen, exported overseas for processing, and then reimported to the United States. Exports have decreased slightly compared to 2017.

U.S. Trade Balance in Edible Fishery Products, 2009-2018



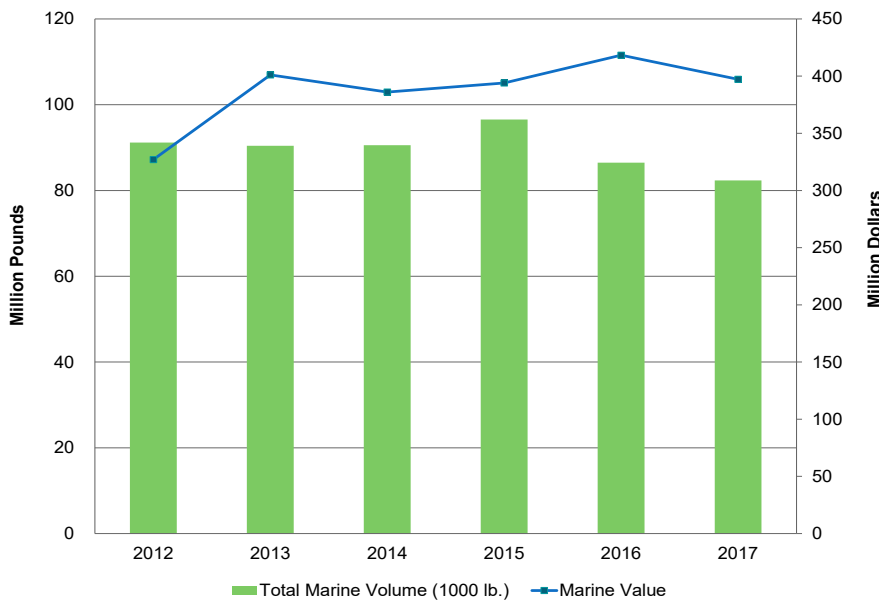
Collecting Reliable Data

The collection and analysis of recreational and commercial catches provide scientists and managers with important information they need to make informed decisions. We use a number of different methods—including surveys, catch cards, and logbooks—to gather recreational and commercial fishing landings data. Fishermen’s landings combined with other sources of fishery-independent data give us a good understanding of the health and productivity of the resource.

Aquaculture

The U.S. aquaculture industry (marine and freshwater) produced \$1.5 billion worth of seafood in 2017, holding steady. Because aquaculture focuses on high-value food species, the value of U.S. aquaculture production equals about 21 percent of the value of total U.S. seafood production, while the volume equals 7 percent of the total production. The top U.S. marine aquaculture species are oysters (\$186 million), clams (\$129 million), and Atlantic salmon (\$61 million).

Volume and Value of Marine Aquaculture Production, 2017





Learn More About the Report

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/fisheries-united-states-2018>

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