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# *Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

## **Division of Marine Fisheries**

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June 24, 2016

### *Marine Fisheries Advisory*

#### **2016 Commercial Striped Bass Season**

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The 2016 commercial striped bass fishery opened on Thursday, June 23, with a quota of 869,813 pounds. Refer to our [Quota Monitoring webpage](#) to see cumulative landings and remaining quota. An Advisory and Closure Notice will be issued when the quota is projected to be taken and the fishery closed.

The open commercial fishing days are Mondays and Thursdays. On open days, a 15-fish daily limit applies to fishermen issued a Commercial Lobster or Boat Permit with a Striped Bass Endorsement; a 2-fish daily limit applies to fishermen issued a Commercial Individual or Rod & Reel Permit with a Striped Bass Endorsement. These limits apply to the permit holder regardless of the fishing location (shore or vessel), the number of permits or endorsements held, or the number of trips taken in a day. The 15-fish limit also applies to the vessel regardless of the number of permit holders onboard or trips taken in a day.

All commercially harvested striped bass must be at least 34 inches in total length and landed in the round, with the head, body and tail fully intact. Commercially harvested striped bass may not be filleted or processed in any manner except by evisceration (i.e. removal of internal organs from body cavity).

During commercial trips it is unlawful for commercial fishermen to possess or land a recreational bag limit of striped bass in addition to their commercial harvest or to retain any striped bass catch at the recreational minimum size of 28 inches. Commercial fishermen engaged in commercial fishing for striped bass may not fish aboard the same vessel at the same time as recreational striped bass fishermen.

When not on a commercial trip, commercial permit holders may fish for striped bass for recreational purposes if they hold a recreational fishing permit. From June 20 through the end of the commercial season, when a commercial striped bass fisherman is recreationally fishing on a closed commercial fishing day, s/he must immediately remove the entire right pectoral fin of any striped bass 34" or greater that is retained. This rule also applies to any person fishing aboard a vessel that is either named on a commercial Striped Bass Endorsement or carrying the holder of a commercial Striped Bass Endorsement. This rule was implemented in 2015 to prevent the unlawful stockpiling of striped bass on closed commercial fishing days (see [Advisory](#) for more details).

Commercially harvested striped bass can be sold only to dealers authorized to purchase striped bass from harvesters. Our website provides a list of [striped bass primary buyers](#). Click on "STB" to sort the list by municipality. All striped bass harvested under the authority of a commercial permit, whether sold or kept for personal use, must be reported to the Division of Marine Fisheries on monthly trip-level [reporting forms](#). Failure to submit these reports for all months of the year in a timely manner may result in the non-renewal of commercial permits and endorsement in 2017.

All dealers authorized to purchase striped bass from harvesters are required to tag the striped bass with a state issued striped bass tag. The tag must be affixed through the mouth and gills or the lower jaw prior to departure from the location of the primary purchase (e.g., boat ramp, pier). This tag shall remain with the striped bass through re-sale. When the striped bass is filleted the tag may be removed from the striped bass but shall remain with the processed striped bass. Once all portions of the striped bass are sold, the tag may be cut into two pieces and discarded. Within 30 days of the close of the striped bass season, DMF will issue a request for authorized dealers to submit a striped bass tag report, which will include an accounting of all used and unused striped bass tags.

For more information about striped bass management, visit our [webpage](#), review the striped bass regulations at [322 CMR 6.07](#), or contact the Division of Marine Fisheries at 617-626-1520.