



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Contact: Teri Frady
508 495-2239

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Georges Bank Yellowtail Trip Limit Activated *Agency Moves Keep Catch Within Quota*

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service today announced limits on the amount of yellowtail flounder that groundfish boats on Georges Bank may retain per trip. The action will be effective on December 21, 2005, and ensure that the fleet does not exceed the annual yellowtail flounder quota.

This year's quota is about 9.4 million pounds, and just over 5 million pounds have been landed. The trip limit is intended to keep this yellowtail fishery open during the next four months, until the fishing year ends on April 30. The trip limit will be 15,000 pounds per trip until further notice, or the end of the fishing year.

Yellowtail flounder fishing on Georges Bank is determined in part through an understanding between the U.S. and Canada. Under its terms, designated portions of the Bank have annual quotas for cod, haddock and yellowtail flounder. When any one of the quotas is reached, groundfishing can be restricted in the areas governed by the agreement.

The Eastern U.S./Canada Area was closed to groundfishing in August 2005, when the cod quota was achieved. In the Western U.S. Canada Area, groundfish vessels may still retain haddock or cod in any amount, and yellowtail in amounts consistent with the trip limit.

Both kept and discarded fish (total catch) are counted toward the quota, which is calculated annually. Total catch of quota species in the U.S. Canada Area is reported daily by vessels, and by fishery observers when they accompany the trip. Dealers who buy the fish also report purchases for each trip landed. NMFS uses all of this information to estimate how much of each quota species has been taken. If a country exceeds its quota, the overage is deducted from its quota for the next year.

NOAA Fisheries Service is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation's living marine resources and their habitats through scientific research, management and enforcement. NOAA Fisheries Service provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, and helping to provide safe and healthy seafood to consumers and recreational opportunities for the American public.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners and nearly 60 countries to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes.

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On the Web:

US-Canada Quota Tracking: www.nero.noaa.gov/ro/fso/usc.htm

NMFS Northeast Region: www.nero.noaa.gov

NOAA Fisheries Service: www.nmfs.noaa.gov

NOAA: www.noaa.gov