

Fishery Conservation and Management

§ 697.20

(d) *Conservation equivalent trap limits in New Hampshire state waters.* Notwithstanding any other provision, any vessel with a Federal lobster permit and a New Hampshire Full Commercial Lobster license may fish up to a maximum of 1,200 lobster traps in New Hampshire state waters, to the extent authorized by New Hampshire lobster fishery regulations. However, such vessel may not fish, possess, deploy, or haul back more than 800 lobster traps in the Federal waters of EEZ Nearshore Management Area 1, and may not fish more than a combined total of 1,200 lobster traps in the Federal and New Hampshire state waters portions of EEZ Nearshore Management Area 1.

(e) *Potential Modifications to Area 3, Area 4, and/or Area 5 Trap Limits in Fishing Year 2003.* The Regional Administrator may issue temporary interim Federal American lobster trap fishing permits pursuant to § 697.4 for Areas 3, 4 and/or 5 prior to completion of NMFS' review of the Area 3, Area 4 and/or Area 5 qualification applications, if the applicant has designated one or more of those areas on their 2003 Federal lobster permit. These temporary permits will become effective on September 1, 2003, for those applicants who have applied in the manner set forth in § 697.4(a)(7)(vi)(D)(I), (a)(7)(vii)(D)(I), and/or (a)(7)(viii)(D)(I). Any vessel issued a temporary trap fishing permit for Area 3 may fish up to 1,800 lobster traps, except as noted in paragraph (c) of this section. Any vessel issued a temporary trap fishing permit for Area 4 and/or 5 shall not fish more than 800 traps. The temporary interim permit will remain valid during fishing year 2003 until such time the Regional Administrator has reviewed and either approved or denied the temporary permittee's historical participation application. If approved, the Regional Administrator may issue a revised permit and/or management area designation certificate, depending on whether the applicant designated that area on his or her 2003 Federal permit at the beginning of the year. Any traps being fished, deployed, or possessed by the qualified Federal permit holder in excess of the number of traps as described in paragraphs (a)(3), (a)(4), and (b)(2) of this section must be removed from the

water within 14 days after receipt of the revised permit, or 30 days after the date it is sent, whichever comes first. Revised Federal lobster permits must be retained aboard the fishing vessel at all times.

(f) *Trap tag requirements for vessels fishing with lobster traps.* Any lobster trap fished in Federal waters must have a valid Federal lobster trap tag permanently attached to the trap bridge or central cross-member. Any vessel with a Federal lobster permit may not possess, deploy, or haul back lobster traps in any portion of any management area that do not have a valid, federally recognized lobster trap tag permanently attached to the trap bridge or central cross-member.

(g) *Maximum lobster trap tags authorized for direct purchase.* In any fishing year, the maximum number of tags authorized for direct purchase by each permit holder is the applicable trap limit specified in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section plus an additional 10 percent to cover trap loss.

(h) *EEZ Management area 5 trap waiver exemption.* Any vessel issued an Area 5 Trap Waiver permit under § 697.4(p) is exempt from the provisions of this section.

[68 FR 14930, Mar. 27, 2003]

§ 697.20 Size, harvesting and landing requirements.

(a) *Minimum carapace length.* (1) The minimum carapace length for all American lobsters harvested in or from the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 1 or the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 6 is 3 ¼ inches (8.26 cm).

(2) The minimum carapace length for all American lobsters landed, harvested, or possessed by vessels issued a Federal limited access American lobster permit fishing in or electing to fish in the Nearshore Management Area 1 or the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 6 is 3 ¼ inches (8.26 cm).

(3) The minimum carapace length for all American lobsters harvested in or from the Nearshore Management Area 2, 4, 5, and the Outer Cape Lobster Management Area or the Offshore Management Area 3 is 3 ⅝ inches (8.57 cm).

(4) The minimum carapace length for all American lobsters landed, harvested, or possessed by vessels issued a

Federal limited access American lobster permit fishing in or electing to fish in the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 2, 4, 5, and the Outer Cape Lobster Management Area or the EEZ Offshore Management Area 3 is 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches (8.57 cm).

(5) No person may ship, transport, offer for sale, sell, or purchase, in interstate or foreign commerce, any whole live American lobster that is smaller than the minimum size specified in paragraph (a) in this section.

(b) *Maximum carapace length.* (1) The maximum carapace length for all American lobster harvested in or from the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 1 is 5 inches (12.7 cm).

(2) The maximum carapace length for all American lobster landed, harvested, or possessed by vessels issued a Federal limited access American lobster permit fishing in or electing to fish in the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 1 is 5 inches (12.7 cm).

(3) The maximum carapace length for all female American lobster harvested in or from the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 4 is 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches (13.34 cm), except as provided in paragraph (b)(7) of this section.

(4) The maximum carapace length for all female American lobster landed, harvested, or possessed by vessels issued a Federal limited access American lobster permit fishing in or electing to fish in the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 4 is 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches (13.34 cm), except as provided in paragraph (b)(7) of this section.

(5) The maximum carapace length for all female American lobster harvested in or from the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 5 is 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches (13.97 cm), except as provided in paragraph (b)(7) of this section.

(6) The maximum carapace length for all female American lobster landed, harvested, or possessed by vessels issued a Federal limited access American lobster permit fishing in or electing to fish in the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 5 is 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches (13.97 cm), except as provided in paragraph (b)(7) of this section.

(7) In the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 4 and EEZ Nearshore Management Area 5, recreational fishing vessels and divers engaged in rec-

reational fishing, regardless of the platform from which they dive, are allowed to possess one female American lobster per fishing trip in excess of the maximum carapace length specified in paragraphs (b)(3) through (b)(6) of this section.

(c) *Mutilation.* (1) Subject to the rebuttable presumption in § 697.7(c)(3), no person may remove meat or any body appendage from any American lobster harvested in or from the EEZ before, or at the time of landing, or have in possession any American lobster part other than whole lobsters, up to the time when a dealer first receives or possesses American lobster.

(2) Subject to the rebuttable presumption in § 697.7(c)(3), no owner, operator or person aboard a vessel issued a Federal American lobster permit may remove meat or any body appendage from any American lobster before or at the time of landing, or have in possession any American lobster part other than whole lobsters, up to the time when a dealer first receives or possesses American lobster.

(d) *Berried females.* (1) Any berried female harvested in or from the EEZ must be returned to the sea immediately. If any berried female is harvested in or from the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 1, or in or from the EEZ Offshore Management Area 3 above 42°30', it must be v-notched before being returned to the sea immediately.

(2) Any berried female harvested or possessed by a vessel issued a Federal limited access American lobster permit must be returned to the sea immediately. If any berried female is harvested in or from the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 1, or in or from the EEZ Offshore Management Area 3 above 42°30', it must be v-notched before being returned to the sea immediately.

(3) No vessel, or owner, operator or person aboard a vessel issued a Federal limited access American lobster permit may possess any berried female.

(4) No person may possess, ship, transport, offer for sale, sell, or purchase, in interstate or foreign commerce, any berried female as specified in paragraph (d) of this section.

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(e) *Removal of eggs.* (1) No person may remove, including, but not limited to, the forcible removal and removal by chemicals or other substances or liquids, extruded eggs attached to the abdominal appendages from any female American lobster.

(2) No owner, operator or person aboard a vessel issued a Federal limited access American lobster permit may remove, including but not limited to, the forcible removal, and removal by chemicals or other substances or liquids, extruded eggs attached to the abdominal appendages from any female American lobster.

(3) No person may possess, ship, transport, offer for sale, sell, or purchase, in interstate or foreign commerce, any whole live American lobster that bears evidence of the removal of extruded eggs from its abdominal appendages as specified in paragraph (e) of this section.

(f) *Spearing.* (1) No person may spear any American lobster in the EEZ.

(2) No person on a vessel issued a Federal lobster license may spear a lobster.

(3) No person may harvest or possess any American lobster which has been speared in the EEZ.

(4) No person on a vessel issued a Federal lobster license may harvest or possess any American lobster which has been speared.

(5) No person may possess, ship, transport, offer for sale, sell, or purchase, in interstate or foreign commerce, any American lobster which has been speared.

(g) *V-notched females.* (1) No person may possess any female lobster possessing a zero tolerance v-shaped notch harvested in or from the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 1.

(2) No vessel, owner, or operator issued a Federal limited access American lobster permit fishing in or electing to fish in EEZ Nearshore Management Area 1 may land, harvest, or possess any female lobster possessing a zero tolerance v-shaped notch.

(3) No person may possess any female lobster possessing a standard v-shaped notch harvested in or from the EEZ Nearshore Management Area 2, 4, 5, 6, and the Outer Cape Lobster Manage-

ment Area or the EEZ Offshore Management Area 3 may possess.

(4) No vessel, owner, or operator issued a Federal limited access American lobster permit fishing in or electing to fish in EEZ Nearshore Management Area 2, 4, 5, 6, and the Outer Cape Lobster Management Area or the EEZ Offshore Management Area 3 may land, harvest, or possess any female lobster possessing a standard v-shaped notch.

[71 FR 13033, Mar. 14, 2006]

§ 697.21 Gear identification and marking, escape vent, maximum trap size, and ghost panel requirements.

(a) *Gear identification and marking.* All lobster gear deployed or possessed in the EEZ, or, deployed or possessed by a person on or from a vessel issued a Federal limited access American lobster permit, and not permanently attached to the vessel must be legibly and indelibly marked with the following:

(1) *Identification.* Effective through April 30, 2000, all lobster gear must be marked with the following code of identification:

(i) A number assigned by the Regional Administrator; or

(ii) Whatever positive identification marking is required by the vessel's home-port state.

(2) *Identification and trap tagging.* Beginning May 1, 2000, lobster gear must be marked with a trap tag (as specified in §697.19) with the following code of identification:

(i) A number assigned by the Regional Administrator; or

(ii) Whatever positive identification marking is required by the vessel's home-port state.

(b) *Deployment and gear configuration.* In the areas of the EEZ described in paragraph (b)(4) of this section, lobster trap trawls are to be displayed and configured as follows:

(1) Lobster trap trawls of three or fewer traps deployed in the EEZ must be attached to and marked with a single buoy.

(2) Lobster trap trawls consisting of more than three traps must have a radar reflector and a single flag or pennant on the westernmost end (marking the half compass circle from magnetic south through west, to and including north), while the easternmost end