



Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

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Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass 2016-2018 Commercial Quotas and Recreational Harvest Limits

Effective Date: January 1, 2016

We have published a final rule that implements the following measures:

1. The 2016-2017 summer flounder (fluke) and scup (porgy), and 2016-2017 black sea bass, commercial and recreational landings allowances, including a commercial black sea bass quota adjustment because of a prior year overage;
2. The 2016 commercial scup period quotas;
3. The 2016 commercial summer flounder state quotas; and
4. A continuation of the commercial summer flounder closure in Delaware in 2015.

2016-2018* Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Specifications, in millions of pounds.

	Summer Flounder			Scup			Black Sea Bass	
	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017
Commercial Annual Catch Limit and Annual Catch Target	9.42	9.19	9.10	24.26	22.15	21.10	3.15	3.15
Recreational Annual Catch Limit and Annual Catch Target	6.83	6.67	6.56	6.84	6.25	5.95	3.52	3.52
Commercial Quota	8.12	7.91	7.89	20.47	18.38	17.34	2.70	2.71
Recreational Harvest Limit	5.42	5.28	5.26	6.09	5.50	5.21	2.82	2.82

*Note, no specifications have been established for the 2018 black sea bass fishery because of a pending stock assessment. See the *Federal Register* for more information.

Commercial Black Sea Bass Quota Adjustment

An adjustment to the final 2016 black sea bass commercial allocation is necessary. In 2014, landings exceeded the commercial quota, resulting in the annual catch limit being slightly exceeded. The commercial black sea bass accountability measure requires that the exact amount of the commercial quota overage to be deducted from a subsequent year’s quota. As such, the 2016 annual catch target is reduced by **8,896 lb.** Using the projected discards for 2016, the final 2016 commercial black sea bass quota is **2,702,867 lb.**

For small entity compliance guides, this bulletin complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996. This notice is authorized by the Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Greater Atlantic Region.

Scup commercial quota allocations for 2016 and Initial Trip Limits, in pounds.

Season	Percent Share	Quota ¹	Possession Limits (per trip) ²
Winter I	45.11	9,232,987	50,000
Summer	38.95	7,972,176	--
Winter II	15.94	3,262,554	12,000
Total	100.0	20,467,716	

¹There were no applicable overages through 10/31/15.

²The Winter I possession limit will drop to 1,000 lb upon attainment of 80 percent of that period’s allocation. The Winter II possession limit may be adjusted (in association with a transfer of unused Winter I quota to the Winter II period) via notification in the *Federal Register*.

Commercial Summer Flounder State Quotas

We are also announcing the 2016 commercial summer flounder state quotas. These state quotas have been adjusted based on previously unaccounted for overages from fishing year 2014 and any known overages through the end of October 2015.

2016 State-By-State Commercial Summer Flounder Quotas, in pounds

	FMP Percent Share	2016 Initial Quota	Overages through October 31, 2015	Adjusted 2016 Quota, less overages
Maine	0.04756	3,864	0	3,864
New Hampshire	0.00046	37	0	37
Massachusetts	6.82046	554,097	0	554,097
Rhode Island	15.68298	1,274,091	0	1,274,091
Connecticut	2.25708	183,366	0	183,366
New York	7.64699	621,244	0	621,244
New Jersey	16.72499	1,358,744	0	1,358,744
Delaware	0.01779	1,445	-48,846	-47,401
Maryland	2.0391	165,657	0	165,657
Virginia	21.31676	1,731,781	0	1,731,781
North Carolina	27.44584	2,229,709	0	2,229,709
Total	100	8,124,035	0	8,122,590

¹2015 quota overage is determined through comparison of landings for January through October 2015 plus any landings in 2014 in excess of the 2014 quota that were not previously addressed in the 2015 quota specifications, with the final 2014 quota for each state.

²Total quota is the sum of all states having allocation. A state with a negative number has an allocation of zero (0).

Delaware Commercial Summer Flounder Closure

The amount of overharvest from previous years is again greater than the amount of commercial quota allocated to Delaware for 2016. As a result, there is no quota available for 2016 in Delaware and the commercial fishery is closed. Effective January 1, 2016, landings of summer flounder in Delaware by vessels holding commercial Federal summer flounder permits are prohibited for the 2016 calendar year. If a quota transfer occurs and the commercial fishery in Delaware is opened, we will announce the changes in the *Federal Register* and notify you in another fishery bulletin.

Recreational Fishing Measures

The management measures for the recreational summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass fisheries will be finalized through a separate rulemaking in the spring of 2016. We will notify you with another bulletin when they are complete.