



United States Department of Commerce  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Northeast Region  
55 Great Republic Drive  
Gloucester, MA 01930

October 20, 2010

Dear Northeast (NE) Limited Access Multispecies Vessel and Multispecies Seafood Dealer Permit Holders:

This letter is intended to clarify reporting of groundfish for sector vessels and those dealers purchasing from them, as well as reporting issues common to both vessels and dealers.

### **Legal-Sized Unmarketable Fish**

Regulations (50 CFR §648.14(k)(14)(viii)) prohibit the owner or operator of a vessel issued a federal NE multispecies permit that fishes on a sector trip from discarding at sea legal-sized allocated (groundfish) stocks. At times this may result in fish being landed that cannot be marketed to a dealer or otherwise used for food. It is essential that these fish be reported properly by dealers and vessel operators in order to accurately account for harvests without double counting of fish and for accurate management of a sector's allocations including the calculation of discards.

**Sector vessel owners and operators** should use the new codes below on their fishing vessel trip report (VTR) to identify legal-sized unmarketable fish (LUMF) that are **NOT** purchased nor received by a dealer but are brought to shore and disposed of by the vessel owner or operator. Each species of LUMF must be reported on the VTR and include the species code name(s) (VTR box #17) and kept pounds (#18). When reporting LUMF use dealer permit number (#20) “**8**” and dealer name (#21) “**LUMF**”. The date sold (#22) should remain blank.

Fish that are received by a dealer either for disposal or sale should be reported on the VTR using that dealer's permit number (#20) and name (#21) as usual.

All discards including those of undersized allocated stocks must be reported to NMFS on the VTR as discarded pounds (#19).

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**Seafood dealers** who receive LUMF from a vessel should report these landings in SAFIS by selecting the disposition code “reason not specified” as the disposition. This will indicate in our data that these fish were received for disposal and **NOT** for sale. Dealers using one of the file upload methods to report their purchases will need to modify their species definitions table to create separate definitions in order to report LUMF accurately. You may get assistance on this from the SAFIS help desk.

### **Reporting of Vessel Trip Report Serial Numbers**

**VTR serial numbers** are used as trip identifiers and the number from the first VTR page (this would be the lowest serial number) used for a trip must be provided by vessel operators to the federal dealer that receives or purchases fish. Dealers are required (50 CFR §648.7(a)(1)(i)) to report this information through SAFIS for every trip received or purchased from a federal vessel with VTR reporting requirements. The VTR serial number is also used in other reporting programs such as hails and VMS reports to identify a trip. This single piece of information is essential to matching the various reports from a trip. Without this matching information and the correct permit number, vessel landings may not be credited correctly. It is in the vessel owners and operators best interest to ensure dealers receive from you and are reporting this information correctly. Vessel owners may view their data as supplied to NMFS by dealers in our Fish-On-Line system at:

<https://www.nero.noaa.gov/NMFSlogin/>

If you have any questions regarding regulations governing the prohibition on the discarding of legal-sized unmarketable fish please contact the Sustainable Fisheries Division at (978) 281-9315. For questions regarding reporting contact your local Fishery Reporting Specialist or the SAFIS help desk at (978) 281-9212.

Sincerely,



John Witzig, Ph.D.  
Director, Fisheries Statistics Office

cc: Multispecies Vessel Operators  
Multispecies Sector Managers