

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- eTRIPS Updates
- Common dealer report issues
- How to report retail boat lobster sales
- Aquaculture reporting issues



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MA E-Reporting Newsletter



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eTRIPS Updates & Enhancements!

MarineFisheries and the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) continuously work to improve the Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System (SAFIS) product for electronic trip reporting. Recent enhancement releases include the following:

1) **Catch Source** was added to the favorites screen in eTRIPS (eDR will get it next)! A species will continue to be set to "Standard" unless a user changes his or her favorite setting. Users may default the Catch Source value for a species to "Aquaculture" or "RSA" when appropriate, or "For Hire" for those who participate in the striped bass sales from party-charter trips allowance.

2) Originally, a user could not identify a target species on a **"No Catch" trip**. Now, when the "No Catch" Disposition is selected, a user may enter a value of "0" in the Reported Quantity field to designate a target species for the trip.

3) **An upgrade to the website interface**, including a responsive design component, has been released for eTRIPS and will soon be for eDR as well. This new design template for SAFIS promotes readability and function on devices with smaller screens, such as tablets, phones, and small laptops. The site will automatically re-size and potentially re-arrange depending on the size of the browser.

This is not a mobile app, but allows for easier use on mobile devices. While the look and potentially link placement have changed, the functionality of the website has not. A preview of the new look can be found [here](#).

4) Soon you will not need to use the mobile site because **eTRIPS mobile** is coming to Massachusetts! *Marine-Fisheries* is in the process of piloting the app. Once configured for all Massachusetts -specific requirements, the app will be released for use by any electronic reporting permit holder! Stay tuned for more information!

User Interface Overhaul

The newly formed SAFIS Outreach Committee met in January in Washington, D.C., and held an extensive discussion on a complete user interface upgrade for SAFIS. The goal of the project is to modernize the user interface and improve speed and functionality while making it more intuitive for end users.

The complete interface overhaul is a long-term project. The first

steps completed were releasing the modern template, standardizing the application throughout all screens (e.g., all save buttons are now green), and adding the responsive design component mentioned above. The next step will be surveying you, the end users, to gather feedback on what you think works, what needs improvement, and the overall user experience. We



encourage all users to participate in this process as your feedback is critical to creating a SAFIS product that will work best for you!

Anyone interested in testing the upgraded interface and becoming an integral part of the redesign should contact Anna at the [stats email address](#) for more information.

Reporting Retail Boat Sales



Retail Boat Permits should be chosen in the “Dealer” field in an eTRIPS report.

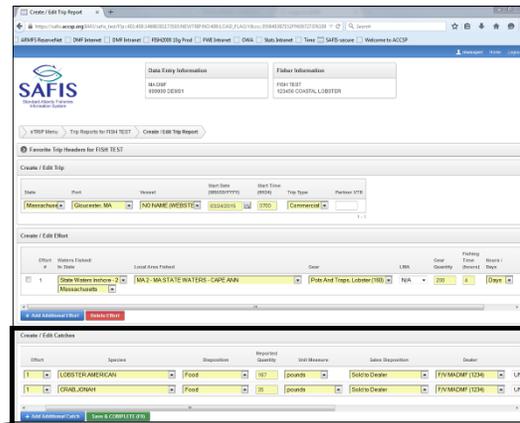
A common mistake in eTRIPS is incorrectly identifying—or failing to identify—the “dealer” for retail boat sales, specifically by those individuals who sell only lobster and/or crabs. In these cases, eTRIPS reports are the sole records Marine Fisheries receive for retail boat lobster sales, and thus, it is imperative to accurately capture these landings.

All retail boat permits, along with all other primary buyers, are loaded into the searchable dealer list provided in SAFIS. Many incorrect entries set the Sales Disposition to “Private Sale,” which does not provide the option to complete the dealer information section. Instead, a retail boat sale must

be reported with the product’s Sales Disposition set to “Sold to Dealer” followed by the dealer’s name selected from the searchable list. In the retail boat case, the dealer’s name would be the commercial harvester’s own name or corporation name. Additionally, this is

how catch sold from the car via the fishbowl application must be completed.

See the image below for an example of how to enter this information correctly in a trip report. Please call or email the statistics staff if you have any questions.

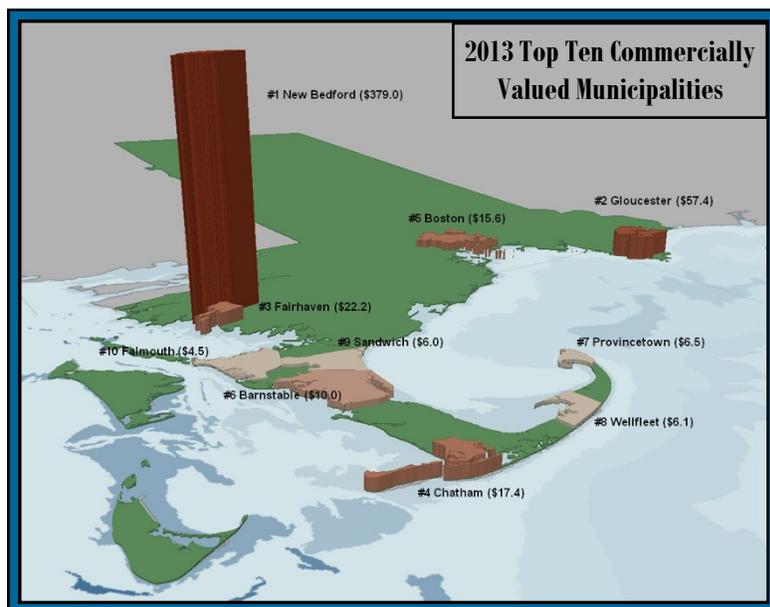


Create / Edit Catches

| Effort | Species | Disposition | Reported Quantity | Unit Measure | Sales Disposition | Dealer |
|--------|------------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | LOBSTER.AMERICAN | Food | 167 | pounds | Sold to Dealer | F/V MADM F (1234) |
| 1 | CRAB.JONAH | Food | 35 | pounds | Sold to Dealer | F/V MADM F (1234) |

+ Add Additional Catch Save & COMPLETE (F9)

Data In Use: Top ten commercially valued municipalities in 2013.





Common Errors in Dealer Data: Spotlight on Prices

The *Marine Fisheries* statistics program receives many questions from seafood dealers concerning reporting price on dealer reports. “Why does the state need that information?”; “Isn’t that my business?”; “What importance does that information have?” are some examples.

When the state and federal partners along the Atlantic coast chose the data attributes to be reported by dealers, fish value was considered critical when making management decisions. Price information is an important component of the transaction with fishermen, and is used only to evaluate the economic side of each fishery. Economic growth or decline in fisheries is critical to understanding fluctuations in a given fishery. It is also important to emphasize that all transactional data is kept strictly confidential, and only individuals who have signed a memorandum of

understanding about the confidentiality of the data will have access to non-summarized data.

Ex-vessel value is an essential figure not only in fisheries management but also infrastructure management, inter-jurisdictional comparisons, state-wide economic analyses, and more. Summarized data are available across fisheries, and are used to rank fisheries within Massachusetts, among ports, and along the Atlantic coast. The value of a given fishery in a given port can also influence funding decisions for infrastructure development and maintenance. When prices are missing from transactions, prices must be estimated, introducing a level of uncertainty and error that could be reduced with improved participation.

In eDR, price is not required to be entered at the point of initial data submission. Standard business practices for many seafood dealers include a delay in establishing the price paid to the harvester. Thus,

eDR is capable of accepting updates to fill in gaps. The eDR application hosts a variety of update methods for price data, including an incomplete reports section, a price board option, and edit functionality within each individual trip. If you have questions on any of those methods, or why price data is included in dealer reports, please feel free to call or email the stats program at any time.

Finally, this has further implications regarding how a dealer reports the species, quantity, unit of measure, and price data. These data elements must coincide. For example, the price should be the price per unit of measure reported (e.g., if you purchase 1000 oysters, the price listed should reflect price/piece). If mismatched quantity and units or units and price are entered, the data summaries are incorrect until the errors can be located and remedied.



“Ex-vessel value is an essential figure not only in fisheries management, but also in infrastructure management, inter-jurisdictional comparisons, state-wide economic analyses, and more.”

Shellfish Growing Areas

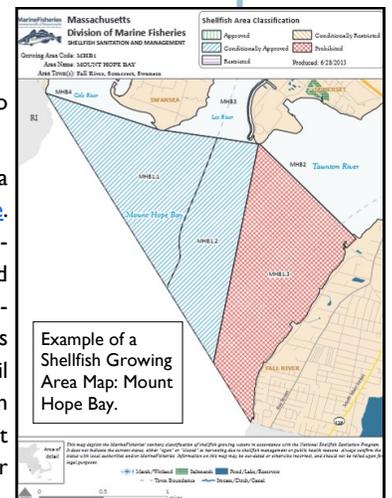
Another consistent error in dealer reports is the misreporting of Shellfish Growing Areas. Accurate growing area data are critical for mitigating public health concerns, as well as quantifying “losses” from specific events such as red tides. *Marine Fisheries* is also able to provide accurate and timely summaries to municipalities regarding the value of their fisheries when these data are reported correctly.

An audit of how dealers utilized the

new Catch Source field highlighted data gaps in the reports. Despite being a required field for dealer reports and public health, there are dealers who do not report growing areas to SAFIS. Additionally, some dealers are consistently reporting incorrect areas, which are discovered through validation either against the harvester reports or town of residence and distance from area calculations. Thus, port of landing is also important, partly

because it can be used to validate these records.

Shellfish growing area maps can be found [here](#). Dealers will be contacted if they are found to have errors or questionable growing areas reported. Please email or call the stats program with any questions about the areas, the audit, or reporting.



Swipe Card Project Update



The Swipe Card Project kicked off in Massachusetts in February 2015. The developers are hard at work on the application, and outreach has begun to interested dealers who would like to help pilot the project.

For anyone unfamiliar with the project, *MarineFisheries* received a grant from ACCSP to develop and pilot a point of sale seafood dealer application. Ultimately, the project implementation expanded to include the Maine DMR, as they submitted a similar proposal to expand upon their elver swipe card system employed in 2014. In Massachusetts, non-federal, shellfish-only dealers are piloting the project, but the hope is to expand to any interested dealer in the future.

The project plan includes the development of an application

that, upon swiping or scanning, will read pre-coded data stored in the magnetic stripe or barcode on the already existing shellfish transaction card, populate the appropriate fields of the dealer report, and initiate a transaction. The dealer will then enter in the remaining information including species and weights, potentially enter the harvester ticket information including effort data, and ultimately submit the ticket. Upon submission, the data would then be available for a dealer to import into existing accounting or inventory software. This application is designed to work at the point of sale, and will improve the timeliness and the accuracy of the data collection.

The application will be available on Windows, Android, and Apple desktop and mobile platforms accessible through

the appropriate “app store.” A dealer would not need an internet connection to enter data, but would in order to submit data. Pilot dealers of varying sizes with varying available technology are working closely with the developers and *MarineFisheries* staff to test the functionality of the application and provide valuable feedback at every step of the process. The goal is to have a product available to test in May and potentially release for production in September.

Additionally, as a result of this pilot, *MarineFisheries* staff are working closely with ACCSP and the Department of Public Health to come up with solutions to help minimize the amount of paperwork necessary for shellfish dealers. Stay tuned!

If you feel you may have reported your shellfish harvest incorrectly, or have any questions on the topic please contact the statistic program staff.



Common Errors in eTRIPS: Aquaculture

When aquaculture harvest began to be recorded via the Catch Source field instead of the Gear and/or Disposition fields, statistic program staff were provided an opportunity to review and audit the collection of aquaculture data. Data gaps were identified, particularly between those permit holders who also hold propagation permits and those who are actually reporting aquaculture landings. Thus, there is uncertainty as to whether the dataset is

capturing the complete aquaculture harvest.

Currently, staff are working to compare propagation permit holders to those reporting both wild and cultured shellfish harvest via both harvester and dealer reports. These audits will go back to 2011 when aquaculture harvest was first captured via trip reports, and be collaborative between the industry, the statistics program, and the *MarineFisheries* shellfish program.

Over the next few months you

may be contacted by either statistics or shellfish staff to verify the source of your activity (wild vs. aquaculture), and may be asked various questions about your harvest to clarify trip reports and/or dealer reports. This will run in conjunction with the audits on the Shellfish Growing Area field in dealer reporting mentioned on the previous page.

If you feel you may have reported your shellfish harvest incorrectly, or have any questions on the topic please contact the statistic program staff.



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The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries is responsible for the development and promulgation of the Commonwealth's regulations governing commercial and recreational fishing activity conducted in the marine environment. Central to our vision is a commitment to balance our living marine resources with our coastal culture through innovation, collaboration, and leadership.

The Management Information Systems (MIS) and Fisheries Statistics Project collects, analyzes, and distributes catch/effort and economic data from lobster, shellfish, and finfish fisheries through landings and catch reports from licensed fishermen and seafood dealers. These data are used to assist managers in the development of fisheries management plans.

See our website for more info!
www.mass.gov/marinefisheries

Meet the Data Entry Staff

Marine Fisheries employs a data entry staff whose primary responsibilities are to help manage and enter incoming data from paper reporting harvesters. However, since they are very familiar with the SAFIS applications, they also provide assistance to the rest of the staff during heavy audit times and help look for other issues in the data.

Megan Linehan focuses on managing the entered data by moving it from the data entry spreadsheets into SAFIS. She also manages the incoming reports via the statistics email address.

George Davis and **Ann Dione** are the primary data entry staff members for all incoming paper reports. Both are instrumental in finding patterns of

incorrect data entry in the paper reports that are then investigated for electronic reporting. Both work extensively in SAFIS as well, and provide valuable input for any updates and enhancements to the SAFIS applications. George also performs historical data updates after audits are processed and cleared for changes.



SAFIS got a new logo!