



# Fish Dealer Report

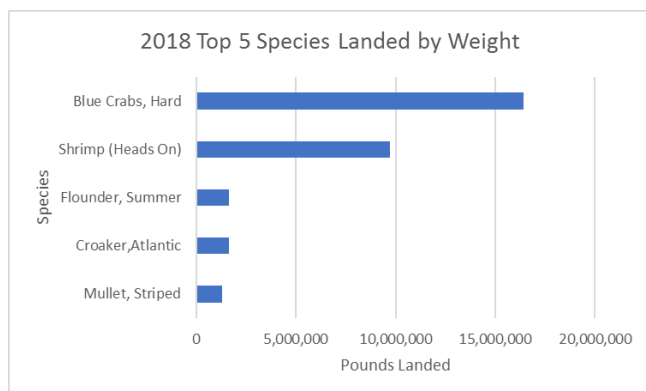
License & Statistics Section, PO Box 769, Morehead City, NC 28557

May 2019

## 2018 COMMERCIAL LANDINGS REVIEW

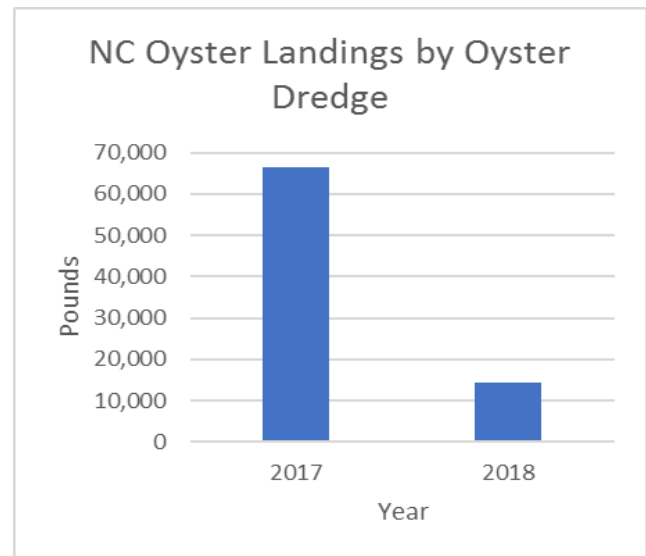
Commercial fishermen landed 45.8 million pounds of finfish and shellfish in 2018, with an estimated dockside value of 77.9 million dollars, based on data collected through the Division of Marine Fisheries Trip Ticket Program. These landings represent a 15.9 percent decrease in landings, and a 19.4 percent decrease in value from 2017. The 2018 landings were lower than the previous five-year average (2013-2017) of 58.5 million pounds, and lower than the previous five-year average value of 91.7 million dollars.

The top five species landed by weight were hard blue crab (16.4 million pounds), followed by shrimp (9.7 million pounds), summer flounder (1.7 million pounds), Atlantic croaker (1.6 million pounds), and striped mullet (1.3 million pounds).



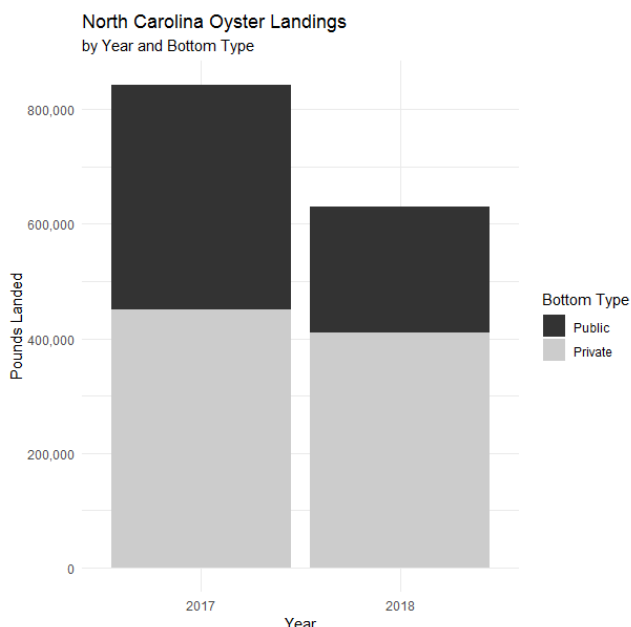
In recent years, and particularly during 2018 with Hurricane Florence, poor water quality associated with storm events has caused significant mortality to oysters across large deep subtidal areas in the Pamlico Sound. Observations and reports from commercial fisherman and academic researchers corroborate Division of Marine Fisheries data,

which show significant losses in 2018 to wild oysters in all of the mechanical harvest management areas. The short mechanical harvest season was reflective of the overall poor condition of oysters in the mechanical harvest areas before the start of the season. The entire state remained open to the hand harvest of oysters, when areas were not impacted by temporary shellfish closures due to heavy rainfall.



In 2018, dealers reported 118,569 bushels of oysters landed, which represents a 25.5 percent decrease from 2017, and a 9.1 percent decrease from the previous five-year average.

Oyster landings in 2018 reported from private leases decreased 9.1 percent, while landings reported from public bottom decreased 43.7 percent compared to 2017.



Hard clams also experienced large changes in landings in 2018, decreasing 26.8 percent from 2017, and decreasing 44.4 percent from the previous five-year average.

Landings of southern flounder decreased by 35.3 percent compared to 2017, and 38.7 percent compared to the previous five-year average. Southern flounder landings from pound nets declined 36.9 percent, landings from large mesh gill nets declined 34.2 percent, and landings from gigs declined 32.3 percent compared to 2017 landings.

Other notable changes include a 57.4 percent increase in gizzard shad landings from 2017, and a 96.9 percent increase in landings over the previous five-year average. Bluefin tuna landings decreased in 2018 by 30.6 percent compared to 2017 but were up 37.2 percent from the previous five-year average. Similar trends were seen in landings of catfishes, which decreased 2.4 percent from 2017, but increased 37.2 percent

from the previous five-year average. Fishermen continued to land shrimp in record numbers in 2018. Although shrimp had decreased 30.0 percent from 2017, they are still up 6.3 percent from the previous five-year average.

### **HURRICANE FLORENCE COMMERCIAL FISHING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

In October 2018, North Carolina legislators authorized \$1.6 million to compensate commercial fishermen and shellfish harvesters for equipment and income losses from harvest reductions due to Hurricane Florence. In November 2018, an additional \$10 million was allocated to reimburse persons holding a Standard Commercial Fishing License, a Retired Standard Commercial Fishing License, or a North Carolina Resident Shellfish License for all or part of the period from September 1, 2018 through November 30, 2018, for reductions in landings. Landings reductions must be demonstrated from trip ticket data or other verified landing compared with average landings over a prior comparable period determined by the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF).

Fishermen qualified for compensation under this program if they had one of the above-mentioned licenses, had a history of landings between September and November 2015–2017, and showed a loss in ex-vessel value in September, October, or November 2018 compared to their average from 2015–2017 during those same months. Monies were sent to fishermen from this program in two phases: 1) losses in September 2018 and 2) losses in October and November. For September, 727 checks totaling over \$3.5 million dollars were sent out. For October and November, 1,041 checks were mailed totaling over \$7.4 million dollars. This program should be completed within the next couple of months.

*The Division of Marine Fisheries is dedicated to ensuring sustainable marine and estuarine fisheries and habitats for the benefit and health of the people of North Carolina.*

If you have questions regarding the Hurricane Florence Commercial Fishing Assistance Program, please contact Brandi Salmon at [brandi.salmon@ncdenr.gov](mailto:brandi.salmon@ncdenr.gov) or 1-800-682-2632.

## LICENSE SALES

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Below are sales as of April 23, 2018 by license type for the 2019 license year (July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019). The values below include active licenses only. Totals do not include transfers, replacements, or voids.

Standard Commercial Fishing License	4,018
Retired Standard Commercial Fishing License	1,247
Commercial Fishing Vessel Registration	6,521
Land or Sell License	137
NC Resident Shellfish License Without SCFL	565
Fish Dealer License	676
Ocean Pier License	19
Recreational Fishing Tournament License	27
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Total Licenses for All License Types	13,210

## REMINDERS

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Staff with the Trip Ticket Program would like to make dealers aware of some common errors that they have been seeing on trip tickets. The most common errors are incorrect license numbers and commercial fishing vessel registration numbers (P-numbers). These errors consist of typos when entering the number, and dealers reporting expired licenses. We ask you to routinely check your fishermen's licenses prior to purchasing seafood as a way of preventing this error. If you need any help adding a fisherman's license to the trip ticket software, please contact your commercial port agent at the number provided on the last page of this report.

Another common error occurs when a dealer buys seafood from a fisherman who is also a dealer. If a fisherman has a dealer license in the same category of the seafood they are selling, they need to fill out the trip ticket at the point of landing and provide you a bill of sale. This type of error was the leading cause of disputes during the Hurricane Florence assistance program, and Trip Ticket staff rely on dealers to report these numbers correctly.

Lastly, staff would like to remind dealers of the disposition code box found on the new trip tickets, and in the electronic software. Staff would like to thank those who are currently using it and encourage those that aren't to start. The disposition code box was added to the trip tickets in 2017 after a request by the Marine Fisheries Commission to help capture seafood landings that aren't sold to a licensed dealer.

## TECH TIPS

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Another commonly encountered error seen during the Hurricane Florence assistance program stemmed from dealers improperly using the "Pack-out Only" and "Purchase Only" features in the electronic trip ticket software. The purpose of these features is to allow fishermen to use a dealer to pack out their product, and then sell the product to a second dealer who is federally permitted. Tickets entered using the "Pack-out Only" feature get sent to the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries (NCDMF) Trip Ticket Program only and do not go to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Federally permitted dealers who purchase seafood from another dealer will then use the "Purchase Only" option when purchasing seafood which will send a trip ticket to NMFS only and not to the NCDMF Trip Ticket Program. If both dealers are not federally

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permitted, the second dealer purchasing the seafood only needs a receipt from the original dealer. Please see the attached flyer detailing proper use of these features.

If you have any questions regarding use of the Trip Ticket software, please contact Brandi Salmon at [brandi.salmon@ncdenr.gov](mailto:brandi.salmon@ncdenr.gov) or call 1-800-682-2632.

**PORT AGENT CONTACTS**

The Trip Ticket Program’s commercial port agents act as liaisons between the division and the commercial fishing public. If you have any questions regarding rules, procedures, or requirements, please contact your nearest agent. If they are unable to answer your questions directly, they will put you in contact with someone who can.

<b>Wilmington</b> Pam Zuaboni (252) 241-0118 <a href="mailto:pam.zuaboni@ncdenr.gov">pam.zuaboni@ncdenr.gov</a>	<b>Morehead City</b> Chuck Davis (252) 808-8029 <a href="mailto:chuck.davis@ncdenr.gov">chuck.davis@ncdenr.gov</a>
<b>Washington</b> Jon Anglemyer (252) 948-3881 <a href="mailto:jon.anglemyer@ncdenr.gov">jon.anglemyer@ncdenr.gov</a>	<b>Manteo</b> Marty Brill (252) 473-2158 <a href="mailto:martin.brill@ncdenr.gov">martin.brill@ncdenr.gov</a>
<b>Elizabeth City</b> Chris Kelly (252) 264-3911 <a href="mailto:chris.kelly@ncdenr.gov">chris.kelly@ncdenr.gov</a>	

**NEW EMPLOYEES**

The Trip Ticket Program has a couple of noteworthy staff changes. Brandi Salmon is the new quota monitoring biologist, replacing Grace Kemp, who has retired. Brandi comes to the Trip Ticket Program from the Division of Marine Fisheries Coastal Angling Program. Brandi has many years of experience working with the public

through MRFSS and MRIP. Brandi has handled the Hurricane Florence assistance program since starting her new position in November. Second, Pam Zuaboni has taken over as commercial port agent in the Wilmington region. Pam has decades of experience working with commercial and recreational fisheries and with the Division of Marine Fisheries and she is a welcome asset to the port agent team. Due to damage from Hurricane Florence, the Department of Environmental Quality Wilmington Regional Office is not fully operational, including the port agent offices. In the meantime, Pam is working from home and can be reached on her work cell phone number provided above. The office is currently open for license sales and is slated to be fully operational later this year.

**NC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION  
MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2019**

**May 15-17: Courtyard by Marriott, Jacksonville**

**August 21-23: DoubleTree by Hilton University Brownstone Hotel, Raleigh**

**November 13-15: Beaufort Hotel, Beaufort**

\*Listen to MFC Meetings live via online streaming. See division website for details: <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/mfc-meetings>



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## REPORT CRAB KILLS

**Why?** Fishermen are often the first to see dead or dying crabs. Such events may occur due to weather or human-induced causes. Water quality conditions that can contribute to crab kills include low dissolved oxygen, rapid salinity change and elevated levels of pesticides in the water. Distress or mortality of peeler crabs in shedders can be an early sign of water quality problems. Rapid reporting of kills helps state agencies determine the cause and how to prevent them in the future.

**What to look for:** Blue crabs exposed to pesticides may exhibit unusual behavior, such as difficulty moving (flipping over, legs falling off) prior to dying. Crabs stressed by low oxygen or extreme changes in temperature or salinity are more likely to become inactive.



**What to do:** Immediately report crab or fish kills when observed at your shedder or on the water. Calls may be anonymous. When abnormal behavior is observed, freeze several crabs and collect water samples. Store the water sample in a clean jar or bag and keep cold.

**Who to contact:**

Weekdays: N.C. Department of Environmental Quality  
Washington Office: 252-946-6481; 800-338-7804  
Wilmington Office: 910-796-7215; 800-248-4536

Weekends/evening: **Environmental Emergency hotline: 800-858-0368**





# NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES ELECTRONIC TRIP TICKET SYSTEM

Select the Purchased Only box if you are purchasing the product from a dealer where the product was landed. Only NMFS will receive this report.

Neither of the two boxes need to be selected if you are the dealer where the product was landed and you purchase the product from the vessel. In this case, both DMF and NMFS will receive the report.

Select the Packed Out Only box if you are completing a trip ticket for product landed in North Carolina, generally at your dock, but another dealer is actually purchasing the product. Only DMF will receive this report.

Please remember to use the proper Port code for product NOT landed at your default location.

- Because our reporting requirements differ from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the Purchased Only and Packed Out Only feature was incorporated into the software to differentiate between those records sent to the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) from those records required by NMFS.
- While DMF requires reports from dealers where the product is landed, NMFS requires reports from the purchaser of the product.
- We apologize for any confusion this may cause. Thank you for your diligence in using this