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Lobster Institute

Winter 2011

The Lobster Bulletin, Winter 2011

Lobster Institute, University of Maine

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Winter 2011

“News, research updates, and information on lobsters and the lobster industry.”

Published by the Lobster Institute

“Protecting and conserving the lobster resource, and enhancing lobstering as an industry...and a way of life.”

Massachusetts Lobster Fishery Invited to Participate in New “Commonwealth Quality” Program

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) has created a new branding and marketing program called “Commonwealth Quality”. The program is designed to identify locally-sourced products that are grown, harvested and processed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts using practices that are safe, sustainable and don’t harm the environment. In a January 2011 letter to Massachusetts fishermen, MDAR Commissioner Scott Soares wrote, “The seal of Commonwealth Quality is intended to tell your customers what you sometimes do not have the opportunity or time to say: that your fishing operation not only adheres to applicable federal, state, and local regulatory requirements, but it also employs practices and production standards that address food safety and environmental concerns.”



Dave Casoni, Massachusetts Lobsterman and participant in the Commonwealth Quality program.

In the promotional data sheet on lobsters compiled by the Commonwealth Quality program, it states, “Commonwealth Quality makes it easy to find lobster from local lobstermen that are safe and sustainably harvested right here in Massachusetts.

Lobstermen who bare the seal of Commonwealth Quality maintain safe and environmentally friendly operations that help preserve our coast, stock and biodiversity.

Additionally, all certified lobstermen adhere to state and local regulations, and maintain best management practices to ensure a safe and high- quality catch.”


Learn more at www.mass.gov/agr/cqp/index.htm ☼

Laitram Machinery Donates Lobster Cooking Equipment to the Lobster Institute & University of Maine

Laitram Machinery has donated specialized lobster cooking equipment to the Lobster Institute. It will be housed at the University of Maine’s Department of Food Science Pilot Kitchen. Laitram and the Lobster Institute are working jointly on testing lobster cooking methods to assess yield differences. Results will be revealed at the 2011 International Boston Seafood Show, and published in a future edition of the *Lobster Bulletin*.

Based in Hahrahan, Louisiana, Laitram Machinery has manufactured durable, high-performance shrimp peeling systems shrimp graders, seafood steam cookers, chillers and other seafood processing equipment since 1949. More information is available online at www.laitrammachinery.com. ☼

NEW: Lobster Institute on Facebook

 The Lobster Institute can now be found on Facebook. We hope you will “like” us. You can find us by typing in *Lobster Institute*. ☼

The **Lobster Bulletin**
published by the



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Cathy Billings, Editor cathy.billings@umit.maine.edu

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Note:

If we inadvertently left anyone out or incorrectly listed your name, please notify us and we will make a correction in the next issue.

*We sincerely thank the over
109 annual donors & sponsors
– businesses, foundations and individuals –
who supported the work of the
Lobster Institute in calendar year 2010.*

We look forward to your continued support in 2011.

(List does not include donors to the C.O.R.E. Campaign.)

**Check out the Lobster Institute website
at www.lobsterinstitute.org,
providing the definitive site for lobster
information with nearly 200 links.**





Contact us at 207-581-2751 if you would like to sponsor our "Research Report" and see your logo here!

RESEARCH REPORT

Readers may contact the Lobster Institute for more detailed information on any of these projects.

❖ **Does less bait mean fewer lobsters?** A report by Maddelyn Harden, University of Maine School of Marine Science student, on her senior capstone project.

The idea for this project was based on recent government proposed regulations limiting herring fishing through a decrease in total allowable catch (TAC). Lowering the herring TAC implies a subsequent increase in overhead cost of bait for fishermen and a possible decrease in the amount of bait used. The goal of our research was to determine whether or not a reduced amount of bait would mean a subsequent decrease in lobsters caught. This study was conducted in 3 different locations, two in Maine and one in Canada with three in-shore fishing vessels from June 2010 - October 2010.



Kenny Drake

The first research trip was to Morell, Prince Edward Island, Canada from June 12- June 14, 2010. Mr. Kenny Drake invited us aboard his boat *The Smuggler* where we conducted two research trips over a period of three days. The first day a control was created by assessing how much bait Mr. Drake typically used per bait bag; once an average

weight was determined, 28 of our bait bags were then baited with half the average amount of bait. This was our reduced bait treatment. We baited 14 traps with the 28 reduced bait treatments and set them with the rest of Mr. Drake's normally baited traps. The bait used in this case was a species of herring known as gaspereau (*Alosa pseudoharengus*). After 2 days we hauled the reduced bait treatment and weighed the final weight of the bait bags and the amount of lobster caught per trap as well as the weight of the normally stocked bait bags and the amount of lobster they caught.

The second trip was to Beal's Island, Maine, U.S.; this trip took place from July 26- July 30, 2010. Mr. Glenn Beal worked with us for a period of 4 days aboard his boat *The Verta Mae*. The same procedure that was used aboard Mr. Drake's

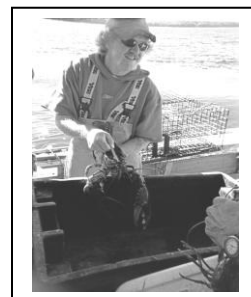


Glenn Beal

boat was carried out once again using Mr. Beal's gear. In this case however, only fifteen reduced bait treatments were used and the type of bait used was a different species of north Atlantic herring (*Clupea harengus*).

The third research trip took place in Belfast, Maine, U.S. from October 8 - October 13, 2010.

Mr. Mike Dassatt invited us aboard his boat *The Sarah Louise*. The reduced bait treatments consisted of 15 bags and were set for a period of 5 days. The bait used was north Atlantic herring (*Clupea harengus*). The same procedure that was used aboard Mr. Drake's and Mr. Beal's boats



Mike Dassatt

was used again for this trip. For all 3 trips the predators in each area, the bottom type, the coordinates and the water temperature were all noted in order to help determine environmental influences on the total amount of lobsters caught.

For each trip, the data collected supported the theory that with a reduced amount of herring bait used there would be no subsequent decrease in lobster caught. Regardless of what the bait bag size was there was no real difference between the normally baited bags and the bait bags that used only half of the normal amount of bait.

A few problems within the experiment did exist and were recorded and analyzed as part of the results. In Prince Edward Island, the experiment lasted for only 3 days when Mr. Drake usually hauls over a period of 6 days. Replication on this trip was also skewed as the reduced bait treatments used bait bags with large mesh, inappropriate for an area containing perch. In Belfast, Maine, 3 traps containing a total of 6 of the reduced bait treatments were lost due to boat traffic creating a slight gap in the final data.

Overall, the 3 trips were fun, insightful, and helped shed light on what would happen if fishermen were forced to buy less bait due to increased herring prices. The results of this study bode well if such a scenario were to ever happen; a reduced amount of bait does not necessarily mean a reduced amount of lobster harvested.

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LOBSTER INSTITUTE

Lobster Bulletin, Winter 2011

Lobster Institute to Host 2011 Canadian/U.S. Lobstermen's Town Meeting – March 25-26

The Lobster Institute will host its eighth consecutive Canadian/U.S. Lobstermen's Town Meeting in Saint John, New Brunswick on Friday March 25 and Saturday March 26. The event is an industry-wide gathering of lobstermen and other interested parties to discuss the status of the lobster resource (*Homarus americanus*) and the industry – from the perspective of the fishermen. Details and registration are available online at www.lobsterinstitute.org for those who receive this *Lobster Bulletin* in time.

As this edition of the *Lobster Bulletin* may not reach all recipients prior to the Town Meeting, a summary of the meeting will be available in the Spring 2011 edition.

The Lobster Institute extends a special thank you to **Darden Restaurants** and **Orion Seafood International** for serving as primary sponsors of the 2011 Town Meeting; and to **Fishery Products International/Highliner Foods**, sponsor of the Seafood Reception. The Institute also thanks the other 2011 sponsors: **Downeast Lobstermen's Association**, **Maine Import/Export Lobster Dealer's Association**, and **Riverdale Mills (Jim & Betty Knott)**. ☼

2010 Maine Lobster Catch Sets Record High

Preliminary figures released by the Maine Department of Marine Resources indicate the landing of lobsters in 2010 reached a record high of 93.4 million pounds. At a value of \$308 million, it was the third most valuable landing – with the record being \$317.9 set in 2005. The average per pound paid for lobsters was \$3.31, which was a 14 percent increase over 2009.

Charitable IRA Law Extended Through 2011

According to an article by the Maine Community Foundation in its January 2011 newsletter, the "Charitable IRA" law will remain in effect through 2011. "For years, estate planners have suggested that retirement assets may be the most tax-effective asset for the owners of larger estates to distribute to charity. These assets are not only vulnerable to heavy taxation as part of an estate, but distributions to heirs are often counted as income and are therefore taxed again.

Until recent legislation, there was a disincentive for retirees to give IRAs to charity during their lifetimes because withdrawals from IRAs--even those given to charity--were subject to income tax. But when the Pension Protection Act of 2006 was signed into law, Americans age 70½ and up were able to make tax-free IRA contributions to public charities.

The IRA Charitable Rollover was supposed to be phased out in 2011, but the Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010 (H.R. 4853) includes a provision to extend the tax-free distributions from IRAs for charitable purposes through 2011."

With this extension in place, the Lobster Institute can help retirees meet their charitable goals and reduce the tax burden on their estates and their heirs. Donors interested using their IRAs for a charitable gift to the Lobster Institute can contact Cathy Billings at 207-581-2751 or email cathy.billings@umit.maine.edu. Gifts can be given for both operational needs of the Lobster Institute or to the Lobster Institute's endowment fund, which is managed by the University of Maine Foundation. In addition, the Lobster Institute can accept gifts of stock, bequests, gifts of property and cash. ☼