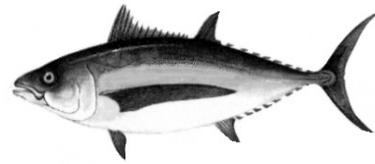


# WESTERN FISHBOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION ©



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Members:

August 20, 2019

Going into August the albacore season has been unremarkable so far. Although a trickle of albacore showed early, the catch has mainly been in the doldrums with a few sparks of activity. All are hoping this is a late start and catches will continue for another two months. Warm water is prevalent all the way to Alaska with a narrow band along the west coast at this time with little up-welling. Unfortunately the regulation and management train continues and included are some updates in this newsletter.

## NOTICES:

**Member Contacts:** WFOA has been producing email updates for many seasons. Many members have changed emails on their vessels or at home and may not be receiving the messages. Please indicate your new regular email and vessels email on your dues receipt or send it via email to [wfoa@charter.net](mailto:wfoa@charter.net).

**Newsletters by Email:** Over half of the membership receives this newsletter by e-mail. If you prefer email as your delivery method send WFOA a message with an up to date e-mail address. You will stop receiving the snail mail hard copy unless requested.

**Treaty Poll:** There are more details farther down in this newsletter but WFOA will be polling its boat owner members on the future of the U.S./Canada albacore treaty in October. You will receive the poll and information via snail-mail.

**2020 Annual Meeting:** At the March 2019 meeting the board voted to hold the 2020 annual meeting in Newport, OR. We will be waiting until later in the season to see what the catch and revenue are like before making a detailed commitment about the venue and length of the meeting.

**MARKET and CATCH:** As of now the albacore catch has improved after a very slow beginning. Some small catches were made in mid-June but the effort remained low and most catches were about 200 miles offshore. In August catches increased in a number of areas from northern California to northern Vancouver Island. Albacore sizes ranged from 11-20 pounds, with increased quantities of smaller fish showing up in August.

Ocean conditions have somewhat normalized along the coast but the lack of up-welling from sustained NW winds that we generally see is light. As of August 20<sup>th</sup> landings in WA, OR, and CA total 1,850st from 278 individual boats.

In other regions pole and line catches of albacore in Japan started very early in March just like the past season and picked up somewhat in the traditional time of May and June. That fishery, generally the same age class caught off the U.S. coast and fairly low in fat on average usually produces 15,000mt to

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20,000/mt of albacore per season. However, this season the catches may have been down as much as 60%. Since that albacore has low oil/fat content much is exported to canner markets in Samoa, Thailand, Europe and elsewhere. This catch has a bearing on mainly our brine price markets.

The Bay of Biscay albacore fishery off Spain and France which had record production last season from July-August and was closed late in August 2018 after reaching a percentage of their TAC. Fishing in that region may again be good this year, and it is another fishery with direct effects on the U.S. west coast market gives we are just a little later than both of those fisheries. Most of that albacore fishery is now MSC certified like so many others.

West coast prices established in July and remain unchanged in August are \$ 3,200/st - Regular brine, \$ 3,300/st for brine-bled, and \$3,400/st for blast frozen grade albacore sold into canned markets. These prices could vary between buyers and all need to check ahead on the prices before unloading.

Blast/Bled traditional sushi and sashimi and loin albacore markets as mentioned in the last newsletter are having issues with cheap foreign albacore. Japan has bought little blast albacore in recent seasons but that could always change. The U.S. and Canada combined catch is only about 5% of the world supply of albacore. Blast frozen albacore probably accounts for around 2%. It seems like demand should keep prices reasonable for that amount but not with subsidized albacore in the market. Much of that is like a shell game where we cannot track the supply chain but we have begun researching it more. We are hoping for more help from Canadian fishing industry as it affects them as much. The North American blast/bled market was good with a few ups and downs up to a few seasons ago based on quality and local aspects of supply, but it has changed 180 degrees.

Link to Informative Video from Canadian Company Tradex Foods. Link: <https://tinyurl.com/y6hzogcs>

My comment I posted on their site: *"Great video and pretty much spot on! However US and Canadians also have a troll(hook and line) fishery in the South Pacific ocean Dec - March which is far south and catch similar albacore*

*that they catch in the North Pacific. About 10-15 boats take part and usually haul their loads back to the west coast. The problem is within the South Pacific longline fishery that fish in more tropical waters - nations such as China catch albacore and are heavily subsidized. That fish for the past few season has destroyed the local markets on the west coast as stated in the video...*

*Without the distinction the albacore caught by our boats gets lumped in . . . "*

**Bluefin Tuna:** Albacore trollers off the west coast have reported some catches of Bluefin and also a few Bigeye Tuna. This is unusual as they generally won't bite the jigs. There seems to be increasing quantities on the west coast in recent years although the U.S. quota remains at 425/mt and is about two-thirds full as of August 19.

An article from "The Outdoor Line" 710AM-ESPN August 12, 2019

*Lots of unusual fish being caught in the ocean off Washington including a monster-sized blue fin tuna*

*A bunch of Pacific blue fin tuna caught off the southern coast including a verified 90-plus pounder hitting the decks of the Ilwaco Tuna Club. Multiple white croakers reeled in by a surf angler off Westport. Catches of thresher, blue and Mako sharks to striped marlin as well as mahi-mahi and Spanish mackerel.*

*There is indeed some very strange fish showing up in the Washington coastal waters this summer.*

*"We've seen a bunch of blue fin tuna caught off the coast and I'd say probably 20 or so have been landed by anglers," said Larry Phillips, the Region 6 Director of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) based out of the Montesano office.*

*Phillips confirmed a 90-plus pound Pacific blue fin tuna was caught Monday (Aug. 12) out of Ilwaco and if verified that would shatter the current state record of 39.20 pounds caught by Sam Ellinger on Sept. 28, 2014 . . . Link: <https://tinyurl.com/y41564gy>*

**U.S. Canada Treaty:** Below is a summary of what WFOA sent out to members in the April and June newsletter. Also, as most know 2019 is the final year of the treaty fishing regime.

WFOA will poll its members in October 2019 for a 30-day period. Polls will be sent in the mail with a couple questions on whether to continue the regime or not. The U.S. Department of State has indicated that a near-consensus of industry probably will be needed to not proceed with new negotiations of extending and/or modifying the regime. Give it some consideration either way and we will appreciate your response when we send out the poll cards.

#### A reminder of 2019 requirements:

U.S. Vessels wishing to fish in Canadian waters pursuant to the treaty must register with NMFS at least seven days prior to the first planned day in Canada by contacting NMFS at (562) 980-4238 or email [albacore.fish@noaa.gov](mailto:albacore.fish@noaa.gov). Also, contact Prince Rupert CG (250) 627-3074 prior to entering and when exiting Canadian waters.

NOTE: U.S. vessels are not allowed to fish within the 12nm, territorial sea of Canada, and Canadian vessels cannot fish within the territorial sea of the U.S.

Number of Vessels: 45 Canadian Vessels in U.S. EEZ, Historical Number U.S. Vessels in Canadian EEZ.

Fishing Season: Canadian's access to U.S. waters is from June 15 - September 15, U.S. vessels can fish in Canadian waters outside of 12nm June 15 - October 31.

Port Access Season: U.S. boats June 15 - Dec 31 under the regime. Jan 1 - June 15 with approval and obtaining the application below.

**Canadian EEZ Permits Required by U.S. Boats:** All U.S. North Pacific Albacore Tuna fishing vessels will need Canadian EEZ License, before entering Canada's EEZ to fish.

To enter a Canadian port for any reason other than force majeure (an emergency) U.S. vessels will need to fill out an application any time of the year. Application to Enter Canada Ports: See Below. <http://tinyurl.com/mvy4pvg>

DFO has developed an approach that builds on the

existing EEZ Port Access (EEZ port access licence) licensing application process. Agents/harvesters only need to check an additional box (#7) to apply for the EEZ tuna fishing license.

The license will allow U.S. North Pacific albacore tuna vessels to enter and fish in Canada's EEZ in accordance with Canadian law.

The EEZ tuna fishing license will need to be applied for on an annual basis.

The same application form is used to apply for both port access and fishing licenses. No new forms are required.

There are no fees for either license for U.S. harvesters accessing Canada's EEZ, either to fish or to access port.

A harvester could potentially have two licenses: one for port access and one for tuna fishing.

If you have previously applied for an EEZ port access license, only an additional box (box #7) needs to be checked to apply for a fishing license.

License application forms can be found here:

<http://tinyurl.com/y75ww26f> and at; <http://tinyurl.com/mvy4pvg>

**HIGH SEAS FISHERIES COMPLIANCE ACT PERMIT: (Beyond 200nm):** Fishing in 2019 began around 200 miles offshore. This may not be important now but its just a reminder if you fish outside of 200nm you will need this permit. Some have given it up over the past few years to not have to obtain VMS units.

High Seas permit info and application: <http://tinyurl.com/mpnj35y>

FOR INFORMATION CALL - NOAA/NMFS Shannon Penna - 562 980-4238

Note: U.S. HMS vessels that have this permit for fishing beyond 200nm of the U.S. are required to have VMS tracking.

#### **Assembly Bill-5: California:**

**THIS BILL WILL MAKE DECKHANDS EMPLOYEES AND NO LONGER INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS**

AB-5 was amended and passed by the California Assembly 59-15 on July 11, 2019 but since then has ended up in the "suspense file" where little action probably will occur hopefully. WFOA will closely follow. See: <https://tinyurl.com/y5buq3sz>

Assembly Bill 5 was introduced by Assembly Member Gonzalez (from San Diego). In short this would codify a CA Supreme Court case from last year which deals with the distinction between independent contractors and employees. This Bill, as currently written, would likely make any crew member on any commercial fishing vessel an employee (as opposed to an independent contractor) and subject to all the things employees can claim (OT, breaks, etc).

Also, the bill could have major consequences for companies like Uber and Lyft and food delivery services whose workers may have to become employees or lose their gigs.

**Marine Stewardship Council (MSC):** After last years re-certification, WFOA and AAFA are about to enter the annual audit phase 2019. Given there is no complete stock assessment and it will not occur now until 2021 with new guidelines, as well as having the MSE process conclude in the north Pacific there should be no areas of concern at this time. MSC will begin doing some public outreach for local fish we have been told and are ready to take part in the effort.

WFOA buyers taking part in the MSC program on an annual basis can be found at [www.wfoa-tuna.org/msc](http://www.wfoa-tuna.org/msc).

**Foreign Crew and Labor Standards:** As we wrote below in the June newsletter. Both the WCPFC and MSC are increasing their focus on the treatment of crew members. While this is primarily focused on Asian longliners it needs to be carefully watched. Without question decent treatment of crew on U.S. vessels sets a world class standard. However, problems may arise concerning the method of crew payment (shares), and working hours (long and varied), as well as adverse public perception generated by the little publicized but heavily enforced rule of Homeland Security that foreign crew are not permitted to leave the confines of U.S. vessels because there is no provision for obtaining

crew visas for U.S. fishing vessels.

**Certificate Holder Forced and Child Labor Policies, Practices and Measures:** Fisheries and at-sea Certificate Holders (CH) in the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) program are required to provide a self-description of policies and measures, including regulatory requirements and procedures that are in effect in the Unit of Assessment, to protect fishing crew from forced labor or child labor, as well as any efforts by the private sector. The objective is to require certificate holders to communicate how government, industry, or other relevant entities protect against forced or child labor

Each fishery and at-sea Chain of Custody client shall provide this information by completing this template. This template should be completed by the client in good faith and be based on information known and available to the client at the time of completion. The information provided should be representative of the range of measures known to the certificate holder. The completed form will be uploaded to MSC database to be published on the MSC website at the same time as the Public Certification Report.

WFOA and AAFA are completing this process now and is due by August 31. Buyers also will have to show that MSC fisheries they purchase from are under this self-description. Vessels all need to have crew contracts onboard and WFOA will be bringing an older version up to date members can use with their own modifications.

#### **OTHER:**

#### **New Members:**

F/V Jo-El CATSAT	Brett Monague Joris van Woerkom	Coos Bay/Newport Supporting
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