

Weather:

Rain and high winds will move into the North East the next couple of days with sustained Gale force winds expected on Georges Bank, the Gulf of Maine and into the Canadian Maritimes. Many smaller boats are heading into shore along with some of the larger vessels. Other boats that have not sailed will remain tied to the docks.

Ground Fish:

Supply has been somewhat steady for most ground fish species with Pollock being the bulk of the landings. Cod landings from smaller boats have picked up a little as Haddock has dropped off. After the stormy weather passes this week the big draggers will head back to the fishing grounds to look for Haddock. This time of year much of the Haddock biomass is bunched up on Georges Bank chasing feed fish, unfortunately this fish is generally softer and has less shelf life because of a number of factors.

1. Gorging on feed fish causes the Haddock to produce strong stomach acids that can spoil the fish if they are not gutted quickly.
2. The filets produced from Haddock at this time of year tend to be soft and thin , because of the lower nutrient value in the feed fish.
3. Shelf life can suffer, because the catch is huge and it takes hours to gut and wash the fish.

Cod, Pollock and other species will generally have better shelf life this time of year.

Scallops:

Landings in New Bedford from the large Scallop draggers fishing offshore have been steady with the occasional spike in landings when a storm moves through the North East. Most landings are now coming from the Channel and the Mid Atlantic with the occasional trip from Georges Bank. The smaller inshore fleet and general category boat landings have been very spotty this season with primarily smaller sizes being offloaded.

The new scallop season in Canada has started, but the weather has caused most of the inshore or small boat fleet to remain onshore. The large offshore vessels will continue to freeze scallops at sea or land huge volumes to freezer plants in Nova Scotia. Demand in Europe and the weak American dollar has resulted in many Canadian companies selling overseas rather than offering product to USA customers.

Prices for Peruvian scallops have doubled over the past couple of months as inventories have dwindled and the majority of landings are being shipped to Europe as Roe On in the shell product.

The Mexican scallop season is finished until the Government assesses the resource and agrees to allow fishing again. Supply from existing inventories is extremely low and the product is very expensive.

The Philippine Government has also closed the Bay scallop season as landings have exceeded the quota. Prices have risen and there is zero product being offered to at this time.

Chinese scallop supply is becoming tight with the major importers raising prices almost every other week. Chinese product is no longer a bargain and with more food scares from China demand has dropped.

Offers from Japanese importers is for the very small sizes from North Hokkaido and pricing remains extremely high due to the weak US dollar. There will be a shortage of Japanese scallops this season with a drop in harvesting and landings in Japan most of the product will remain in Japan or go to the highest market.

FAS Haddock:

The Norwegian Hook boats have started fishing with modest landings expected this October. Current supply should last until the new product arrives in early December. Prices are holding steady with most product being shipped to Great Britain, but we are optimistic prices could drop when all of the fleet is fishing.

FAS Alaskan Cod:

The Alaskan Long Line Cod season is in full swing with landings being shipped out through Seattle weekly. Prices are about the same as this time last year, but some sizes are getting a premium in the European and Japanese markets. With the consolidation of quota and the season expected to last longer supply should remain strong this fall and early winter.

Halibut:

East Coast Halibut landings are very low and prices extremely high with very few boats expected to land large volumes during this cycle. Some hooked boats are fishing Swordfish, Tuna or shark, but will return to Halibut fishing as the Swordfish move South with the Gulf Stream.

West Coast Halibut landings remain very low, but with the season ending many boats will put in their last effort to land the allotted quota and there could be a spike in landings next week. Expect prices to remain very strong for fresh and frozen inventories.

Salmon:

East coast farmed Salmon supply is strong, and prices remain steady or are dropping on select sizes. Some farms will be removing mature fish this fall and there could be some bargains for these fish.

West coast Salmon landings have been very strong this year with some record catches in particular areas of Alaska and British Columbia. Other areas are still experiencing low recruitment and consequently lower than expected landings. Overall this has been an excellent season with abundant fresh and frozen salmon available.

Shellfish:

Landings of shellfish have been steady, but with rain and gale force winds expected for a couple of days this week, supply will drop off and some areas could be closed because of heavy run off and coastal pollution.

Swordfish:

American and Canadian boats continue to have good landings with prices very reasonable for this time of year. Much of the fleet is currently fishing the Gulf Stream from Georges Bank to the Flemish Cap. Be careful when purchasing Swordfish as the quality can be radically different from the beginning of a trip to the last days of fishing.

Tuna:

Recently the Province of Prince Edward Island had a Tuna opening, but landings were dismal and much of the product was small Albacore tuna. As I have mentioned many times in this weekly blog, Tuna is the one species that has been over fished in most places on this Planet. The American and Canadian governments have been the most proactive in protecting the fisheries, and the Biomass is slowly rebuilding.