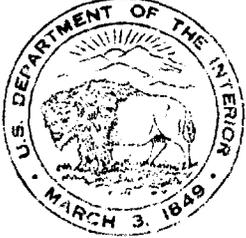


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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FISH AND SHELLFISH AVAILABLE FOR HOLIDAY SEASON

Good supplies of staple and specialty types of fish and shellfish will be available for the holiday and preholiday events of the fourth quarter, the Fish and Wildlife Service reports in the October-December issue of Commercial Fisheries Outlook.

The quarter will be highlighted by a massive sales effort centered around the the "Fish Parade", which is the industry's designation of its National Fish Week, October 29 to November 3. Such items as oysters, shrimp, crab, clams, lobster, salmon, halibut, tuna, sardines, fish sticks and fillets, as well as other fish will be in good supply although the available quantities of some of these items will be lower than a year ago. Prices for fresh and frozen fish and shellfish products will be slightly higher but the general level of canned fish will be somewhat lower.

The quarter should see additional interest resulting from the adoption of voluntary Federal standards for fish sticks and an upturn in that sector of the fishing industry is expected.

Cold storage stocks are down about seven percent below last year but the supplies are still ample with some items even being in better supply. Landings will follow the seasonal pattern which means reduced activities in some fisheries.

The Alaska salmon pack, low last year, shows a gain. The Alaska pack as of September 1 this year was 2,819,000 standard cases, a 21 percent increase over the pack of September 1, 1955. The total pink salmon pack was down slightly but increases in the red and chum salmon packs more than offset the loss.

Oyster production will be in evidence on all coasts although the Atlantic oyster beds are still showing the effects of the hurricanes of recent years. The Pacific Coast oysters will be in an expanded supply. A heavy and growing demand for small oysters from new consumer groups in areas where oysters were not formerly readily

available is one reason why supplies will be trailing the demand. Prices will probably be somewhat higher.

Shrimp landings up to the end of August were below expectations but September and October are the peak months for shrimp production barring unforeseen weather conditions. Lobster production in Maine was down one third and the landings will experience their usual sharp drop during the latter part of the quarter. However, the harvest to date is nearly four and a half million pounds, which means that there will be fair supplies for the lobster lovers. Spiny lobster imports are up as are the holdings. Hard crabs in the east are in moderate or good supply while the production of the Dungeness crab in California is expected to rise sharply during the quarter. Surf clam landings in New Jersey are 26 percent up but Maine soft clam landings are 19 percent down.

Tuna is in good supply with the pack already 13 percent ahead of the corresponding period of last year. The halibut supply is higher than in 1955 and will be considerably more than 60 million pounds, due to the extended fishing period. Maine sardine production is higher than in 1955; California expects a normal pack.

New England groundfish landings will go into the seasonal decline; cod production is traditionally low in the fourth quarter; haddock landings will hold up until the middle of the quarter when a decided drop can be expected; the downward trend in the harvest of ocean perch has been reversed but the 1956 catch will be short of the 200 million pound average for 1950-1954.

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