

Information Bulletin



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1976 HALIBUT CATCH

The catch of halibut by the North American fleet in 1976 was 27.3 million pounds, about 300,000 pounds less than was taken in 1975. In Area 2 (south of Cape Spencer, Alaska), the season closed on September 8. Area 3 (north and west of Cape Spencer) closed on August 12. In Area 4, the Bering Sea, east of 175° W longitude, the season closed on September 30; west of 175° W, the season closed on November 15.

The quota for Areas 2 and 3 in 1976 was 25 million pounds, 13 million pounds in Area 2 and 12 million pounds in Area 3. The catch was 12.8 million pounds in Area 2 and 14.0 million pounds in Area 3. The catch in Area 4, which was controlled by a fixed season, was 0.5 million pounds. Canadian landings were 11.9 million pounds and U.S. landings were 15.4 million pounds. Landings in Washington and Oregon were 1.0 million pounds, 9.4 million pounds in British Columbia, 7.5 million pounds in southeastern Alaska, and 9.4 million pounds in central Alaska.

Analysis of log book records indicate that catch per unit effort (CPUE) in 1976 was lower than in 1975. The CPUE in Area 2 declined more than 10 pounds and in Area 3 declined about 5 pounds.

Prices paid to fishermen for halibut continued at a high level. The average price was about \$1.25 per pound. Accordingly, the 1976 landings will have a value of nearly \$34 million, far above the previous record of \$25 million in 1972.

These statistics of the 1976 fishery are preliminary. A more detailed account of the fishery and of stock assessment will be presented at the Commission's Annual Meeting which will be held in Vancouver, B.C. from January 25-28, 1977.