

**Island
Ad-Vantages** 

**THE WEEKLY
PACKET** 

THE VIEW FROM ATLANTIC AVENUE
By: **Alexa Dayton, Executive Director**

July 13, 2023

Are Higher Lobster Prices a Good Omen?

With the traditional fourth of July start to our wonderful Maine summer comes the traditional steady stream of visitors from away, and perhaps the same is true for you, but my guest room is as busy as a turnstile on the New York subway until early September. And of course, every one of my lovely guests usually starts off with “when can we have lobster?”, or “I can’t wait to eat lobster every day while I’m here”, and so begins the annual market scan for the ‘best lobsters’. This annual ritual has taught me something about the ups and downs of lobster price, and I’ve also come to appreciate a higher boat price for lobster as a good omen for everyone who loves the State of Maine.

“What goes into the price of lobster?” you might ask. Well, that’s a truly complicated story; at the end of the day though, it’s all about the timing of having just the right number of lobster eaters and pickers out there for the amount and type of lobster landed. Shifts in timing of the lobster shed, overall landings, shifts in buyers and tourism, diplomatic tensions and competing with product left over in the freezers can screw up the delicate balance. But when we manage to hit the sweet spot of matching local demand with locally-harvested soft shell lobsters throughout the summer months, magic can happen for the future and hopefulness in Maine.

Throughout the Spring, it costs a lobsterman more to fuel up, bait traps, and bring along the deckhand than she makes in selling her catch. My lobster fishing friends tell me though, that whatever the profits or losses, they will likely keep on fishing because when the timing of the shed matches the arrival of summer visitors, it means a return to running in the black. And so, when my visiting friends gripe slightly about what might seem like a high price for lobster this year, I remind myself that it’s a very good omen for Maine, and perhaps even signals something of a restored delicate balance. As I dig into my favorite part of the lobster (I like the claws best) I’m reveling in the start of a Maine summer that feels back to normal, knowing that what I’m paying for my lobster this year is one of the best ways I can support our local fishing businesses, and with that the heritage and way of life that attracts us to this special place.

Do you have a question about our fisheries? Send it to info@coastalfisheries.org or call 207.367.2708. Learn more about MCF by visiting us online at www.coastalfisheries.org.

FISHERIES LOG

Prices to Harvesters in Stonington

As of 7/10/2023

Lobsters (shedder): \$4.50/lb.

Lobster (hard shell) \$6.00

Lobster (select) \$7.00

Fuel (diesel): \$3.15/gal.

Fresh crate of pogies: \$110

Oceanographic Buoy I-01

44°6’10”N 68°6’44”W - Frenchboro

Water Temperature (50 meters): 47.62°F 8.68°C

Source: www.neracoos.org

