

SABLEFISH FISHERY BIOLOGICAL SAMPLE COLLECTION PROGRAM

- The objective is to collect biological samples in proportion to the amount of catch.
- Catch is the j-cut weight of retained fish.
- A sample should be collected at each 50,000 lbs catch increment for the vessel (e.g. collect a sample at 50,000 lbs, 100,000 lbs, 150,000 lbs, etc as the catch for the vessel accumulates through the fishing year).
- Each sample should consist of approximately 20 to 25 Sablefish (see below for instructions specific to each gear type).
- Only heads (marked as female or male when possible) are required for biological samples.
- Any fish below the legal size limit (55 cm) must be discarded at sea after collecting the head.

Selecting Sablefish for the Sample

1) Trap Gear Instructions

- Estimate which set will complete a 50,000 lb catch increment.
- Estimate how many sample traps will be needed to collect approximately 20-25 Sablefish.
- Attach a mark to each sample trap. Try to space the sample traps throughout the string.
- Collect all the Sablefish in each marked trap.
- Do not grade, sort, or discard any Sablefish in the marked traps – put them all in the sample.
- Keep the catch of the marked traps separate from the catch of any other traps.

2) Longline Gear Instructions

- Estimate which set will complete a 50,000 lb increment.
- Collect the first 5 Sablefish from each skate until you have collected 20 fish.
- Do not grade, sort, or discard any of the first 5 Sablefish from each skate – put them all in the sample.
- Keep the sample fish separate from any other commercial catch.

Preparing the Sablefish in the Sample

- Attach the same colour cable tie through the gills and mouth of each Sablefish in the sample.
- J-cut the Sablefish as per commercial practice to remove the head.
- Determine the sex of each Sablefish and mark the gill cover (operculum) on ONE side of the head with one knife cut for a male, and two knife cuts for a female. If the fish is too small to reliably determine the sex, do not mark the gill cover. Refer to the Sablefish Sex sheet for detailed guidance on determining the sex and marking of the fish.
- Freeze the heads. Do not mutilate or deform the heads by squashing them in any way.
- Frozen samples will be collected during the offload and sampled in port.

Completing the Sablefish Fishery Biological Sample Collection Logbook

- At the beginning of your trip enter the VRN, vessel name, skipper name, and hail out number.
- **Each day:** record the date and daily Sablefish catch **in j-cut lbs**.
- Keep the total Sablefish catch up to date by adding each daily Sablefish catch.
- When the total Sablefish catch reaches each 50,000 lb increment, collect a sample.
- When collecting a sample, record the set number, how many fish were collected, and the colour of cable tie that was used. The set number and haul date should both match what was entered into your Integrated Groundfish Fishing Logbook. Use a different colour cable tie for each sample and never use the same colour of cable tie more than once in a trip.

For questions please contact: Birgit Gettings(778) 227-0395 or Brendan Connors (250) 858-7028

