

DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES

(Newfoundland Area)

NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES IN 1961

The Newfoundland fishery in 1961 has ended at a lower level than in either of the past two years. Total landings of all species are estimated to be 502 million pounds, a decrease of 12.3 per cent from last year. However, the higher prices paid for most species resulted in an estimated landed value of 14.8 million dollars, a decrease of only 6.5 per cent from 1960.

The number of fishermen increased slightly, the result mainly of an increase in the number of people classified as fishing on a part time basis. One freezing plant came into operation during the year while a salt fish plant was destroyed by fire in November. Four trawlers, a large longliner and several smaller vessels were added to the off-shore fleet this year.

During the first four months of the year, landings were higher than during the corresponding period in 1960. This was due to the abundance of haddock on the Grand Banks and the increase in the number of off-shore vessels fishing in that area. However, in the spring an unusually heavy and prolonged ice blockade closed many ports and inshore waters on the east coast. As a result, both the lobster and cod fisheries were delayed by three to four weeks when compared with 1960.

Fine warm weather prevailed throughout the summer favouring both the inshore and the offshore operations. In spite of this, however, landings for the months June to September lagged far behind those in 1960 and since these months are decisive, it was obvious that fall improvement, if any, would not compensate the inshore fishermen for their poor catch during the summer season. Cod landings in that period were the lowest since 1958. In October and November, landings of cod exceeded those of 1960. The supply of fresh and frozen bait was relatively good in all fishing areas. Squid was particularly plentiful and considerable quantities were sold for freezing. Areas which suffered the greatest decline in landings are those stretching from White Bay to Conception Bay, parts of the West Coast and southern Labrador. Generally speaking, fishermen on the Southwest coast fared better than last year.

Salted Codfish

Cod landings amounted to only 328 million pounds compared with 406 million pounds last year and the total production of salted fish was the lowest since 1958.

The failure of the trap fishery together with the increased utilization of cod by freezing plants were largely responsible for the decrease in the production of salted fish this year.

The following table gives the comparative salted codfish production for the years 1960 and 1961. The light salted cure is shown on a dry weight basis while the heavy

salted cure is shown in wet weight:

SALTED CODFISH PRODUCTION
(cwts. of 112 lbs.)

	<u>1 9 6 1</u>		<u>1 9 6 0</u>	
	<u>LIGHT</u>	<u>HEAVY</u>	<u>LIGHT</u>	<u>HEAVY</u>
Newfoundland (Island)	179,966	312,708	201,685	609,798
Newfoundland (Labrador)	<u>7,950</u>	<u>142,249</u>	<u>16,650</u>	<u>139,577</u>
	<u>187,916</u>	<u>454,957</u>	<u>218,335</u>	<u>789,375</u>

The production of light salted fish dropped by 13 per cent to the lowest production ever recorded, thus continuing the trend which has been in evidence since 1954. On the other hand, the production of heavy salted fish which had been increasing steadily for many years dropped by almost 40 per cent from last year's high level. On a light dry basis, the total production is 30 per cent below 1960 and only 5 per cent above the record low production in 1958. Higher prices appear to have kept the production of light salted fish from falling by the same extent as it did in 1958. At the same time, the large decrease in production of heavy salted fish is the result in part of the high prices paid by freezing plants for fresh fish.

On an area basis, the greatest decreases from last year were noted on the east and northeast coasts, Placentia Bay, and southern Labrador. The fishery on the northwest coast which had been poor in 1960 was also poor this year while in Placentia Bay where last year's fishery had been exceptionally good, this year's decrease brought that area back to the average level recorded over the past few years. The fishery in southern Labrador and on the north side of Belle Isle Straits was poor this year. On the other hand results of floaters operating for the most part north of Batteau were well ahead of last year. This accounts for the increased production of heavy salted fish in that area.

The carry-over of the 1960 production of light salted fish into the 1961 season was only slightly higher than in the previous year and, consequently, little difficulty was encountered in clearing out these stocks. Market demand continued to be strong and this, together with the low production, created conditions favourable to high prices on first-hand sales. In spite of this it took some time for prices to firm up. By the middle of September, however, fishermen were receiving from 50¢ to \$1.00 more than last year. Further increases have since been noted and if the present situation continues there should be no difficulty in marketing the balance of this season's catch.

In sharp contrast, however, there was a very large carry-over of the 1960 production of heavy salted fish mainly due to the very high production recorded in that year. Some of this fish was desalted and exported as reconditioned light salted fish. A substantial quantity was shipped to Portugal in the early spring and this, together with exports to the Caribbean, had considerably reduced the stocks on hand by the start of the 1961 production year. Nevertheless, some stocks of last year's fish remained in the Province throughout the summer. The low production this year has effectively minimized possible marketing difficulties and at the same time held the price up. Competition between mainland and local interests has not been as

keen as in previous years and shipments to the Canadian Mainland are well below last year. As the year closes demand continues to be good, stocks are well below last year's levels and the balance should be marketed without difficulty.

Frozen Groundfish

The production of frozen groundfish is estimated to reach the record level of 64 million pounds, 6.5 million pounds more than in 1960. The previous high was in 1956 when 62.3 million pounds were produced. This could not have been achieved without a large effort on the part of management to obtain a greater portion of inshore cod landings by offering fishermen higher prices and by expanding collection services. Also of paramount importance in contributing to the high production was the phenomenal haddock fishery enjoyed by offshore vessels during the first six months of the year. As early as the end of March, haddock landings had climbed above the level reached during the full twelve months of the past two year. On an area basis, plants located on the Northeast coast produced about the same quantity of frozen products as in 1960, while those on the Southeast and South coasts increased their output considerably.

The following table shows the output of frozen groundfish for the past four years:

Frozen Groundfish Production by Species

Newfoundland 1958 - 1961

Quantities in 1'000 pounds.

	<u>1961*</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1959</u>	<u>1958</u>
Cod	38,384	36,567	39,712	32,185
Haddock, Hake, etc.	11,158	6,791	8,058	8,442
Redfish	6,539	5,213	4,087	7,273
Flounder	7,115	8,606	6,368	5,864
Halibut	430	243	317	199
Catfish and Pollock	474	139	342	242
	<u>64,099</u>	<u>57,691</u>	<u>58,884</u>	<u>54,205</u>

* Preliminary

As in previous years the U.S. was the principal buyer of Newfoundland frozen fish. This market received an important impetus this year when the Canadian dollar was devalued in terms of U.S. Currency. However, exports to Britian which occurred in 1960 for the first time in many years continued to expand and more of Newfoundland's firms entered that market.

In spite of the high production, holdings in Newfoundland of frozen groundfish are slightly below those of last year. This situation is related to movements in the Canadian and U.S. stocks of frozen groundfish reflecting in general an improved market situation.

Lobster

The 1961 lobster fishery was only moderately successful. The catch, at 4.2 million pounds, was 5.9 per cent lower than

during 1960 but higher than in 1959. Fair catches were reported from the South and the West coasts but decreases were noted in most parts of the East coast and in Placentia Bay. Total value of the catch was \$1.4 million only slightly less than in 1960. Opening prices for lobsters were about the same as a year earlier but prices climbed to a higher level towards the close of the season. Apart from a small quantity which were canned most lobsters were exported alive.

Salmon

Total salmon landings were just over 2 million pounds, about the same as last year and slightly better than the eight year average of 1.8 million pounds. Actually the catch in Newfoundland was well below last year's level. On the other hand, landings on the Labrador were almost double those of 1960. Prices to fishermen were about the same as last year but due to the high Labrador catch where prices are somewhat lower, the total landed value declined relatively more than the volume. The demand for fresh Newfoundland salmon both at home and abroad was good.

Squid

Just under 20 million pounds of squid were taken, nearly double the quantity landed in 1960. Most of this species was used for bait either fresh or frozen and a small quantity was dried. There was a considerable demand by foreign vessels for frozen squid and some firms made sizeable sales. Stocks of frozen squid remaining in the Province are more than adequate for winter and spring operations. The good squid fishery enabled fishermen in most areas to have a successful trawl fishery and this combined with good weather helped inshore landings in October and November to become the highest for several years.

Herring

The total herring catch is estimated at 11 million pounds, a reduction of 26 per cent from the previous year and the lowest catch in at least 50 years. Despite lower landings prices of herring remained at about the same level as in 1960. More than 40 per cent of all herring landed was used for bait and practically all the rest was pickled. Herring fishermen received a total of \$190,000. for this species which represents a 26 per cent decline from last year.

Mackerel

For the first time since 1956 mackerel has been taken in Newfoundland waters by inshore fishermen in significant quantity. It is estimated that just under 2.2 million pounds were landed during the current year. The bulk of the catch was made by fishermen in Notre Dame Bay but significant quantities were also taken in White Bay. Small quantities came from Placentia Bay, Fortune Bay and Southwest coast. Most of the catch was pickled but fishermen on the Southwest coast also used this species for bait.

Turbot

Turbot fishermen landed 1.3 million pounds this year, the same as in 1960 but 21 per cent less than the 1.6 million pounds taken in 1959. More than 96 per cent of the total catch was pickled and sold on the Mainland while the rest was frozen, dressed or filleted. As usual most of the catch came from Notre

Dame Bay (Green Bay) with fair quantities being taken in White Bay and Trinity Bay. Market conditions remained about the same as last year and prices showed no significant change.

Seals

The Seal fishery showed poor results again this year although no vessels were lost as was the case in 1960. Six vessels left for the ice fields but most of them became trapped in the ice and failed to reach the herds spotted by patrol planes. Their total catch amounted to 25,945 pelts valued at \$123,000. In addition 15,259 seals were taken by landsmen who received from \$5.50 to \$11.00 per pelt. As usual, Norwegian vessels also participated in the hunt and for the first time a Russian vessel equipped with helicopter, took part.

Whales

Nearly three times as many potheads were landed in 1961 than in the preceding season. The large number of pilot whales which appeared off the east coast is probably the result of the abundance of squid. Altogether 2,946 were taken in Bonavista Bay and 3,316 were taken in Trinity Bay for a total catch of 6,262 whales; last year only 1,878 were taken. No large whales and only a few mink whales have been reported. Most of the production was used locally for mink food but some meat was exported.

Fish Meal and Marine Oils

The estimated production of fish meal for 1961 is 19 million pounds compared with 15.5 million pounds in 1960. An increased production of frozen fish products and the installation of an additional fish meal plant resulted in higher fish meal output. Due to the world supply situation, fish meal prices remained steady but were at a low level.

The production of marine oils was 725,000 gallons, a 20 per cent drop from the 906,000 gallons produced in 1960.

Men, Boats and Gear

The number of fishermen in 1961 was 18,650 compared with 18,253 a year ago. Full time inshore fishermen numbered 14,280 while 3,570 fished part time. The increase in the number of part time fishermen was due in part to temporary layoffs in the forest industry. The offshore vessels employed about 800 men, some 50 more than in 1960.

Four trawlers were added to the offshore fleet in 1961. In addition, one large longliner was purchased from the Faroe Islands and several smaller boats were built locally. The number of inshore motor boats has been increasing steadily since 1956. This year there are about 9,450 of these craft compared with 9,073 last year.

Economics Branch

During the year the Branch was primarily concerned with the collection, compilation and analysis of statistical information on the Newfoundland fishery. An economic survey of the primary lobster fishery was begun late in the year. One member of the staff has been engaged full time on this project and it is expected that the study will be completed early in the new year.

INSPECTION SERVICE

Salted Fish

An important step taken in the inspection of salted fish during the year was the introduction of uniformity of grading between Newfoundland and the other Atlantic Provinces. This action, taken under the Fish Inspection Act, established similar grade standards for salted fish being exported from Canada.

In comparison with 1960 there was an increase in sales of light salted cod to Spain and Italy. Actually, supply did not meet demand. There were no serious market complaints with respect to quality. As a matter of fact, reports from the Spanish market were more favourable than they had been for some time.

There were substantial increases in quantities of Labrador cure inspected for Portugal, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico. However, the amount of wet salted fish shipped to the Canadian mainland for further processing was down. A shipment of Labrador saltbulk to Italy received favourable market reaction.

Competition was quite keen and as a result some exporters accepted excessively damp fish. This necessitated extra drying by mechanical means in order to meet market requirements. In some localities, skin-heated fish was fairly common because of the hot, dry weather experienced.

Two new plants operated for the drying of salt fish during the year, and renovations were made to several existing plants. On the other hand two salted fish plants discontinued operations and one was destroyed by fire. In this latter instance the loss included fish stocks of approximately 2,000 quintals.

A total of 2,630 inspections was carried out on 430,850 quintals of salted fish, of which 168,357 quintals were light salted and 262,493 quintals were heavy salted. Compared with 1960 this represented a slight decrease in the light salted cure.

Filleting and Freezing Operations

Four fresh fish processing plants operated under the Canadian Government Specifications Board requirements.

Sales of frozen filleted fish were made to the United Kingdom in greater volume than in previous years; and a lot of 50,000 pounds of round, gutted, head off, small haddock was frozen for the Jamaica market.

One new plant had trial runs in October and is expected to be in full production in the coming year. One firm added a meal plant to its facilities.

In an endeavour to promote the sale of frozen turbot in mainland centres, the Department arranged with the owners of filleting and freezing plants located in turbot producing areas of the East Coast to process and freeze filleted and dressed turbot. The outcome of this experiment will be watched with interest.

Pickled Fish

Pickled fish production increased somewhat due primarily to the availability of mackerel. Inspections showed an increase of 6,629 barrels over 1960. Inspected were 10,865 barrels of herring, 3,179 barrels of turbot and 2,475 barrels of mackerel.

Inspection Laboratory

The work of checking on the acceptability of products being marketed by fish processing firms was continued both by testing daily frozen samples received from the various plants at the Laboratory and by on-the-spot sampling of end of line production through facilities of the M/V "Belle Bay". Particular emphasis was placed on the examination of plant water supplies.

In the chemical section analyses of by-products included the determination of the protein content of fish meals and Vitamin A content of fish oils. All imported salts used in the salt fish industry were analysed to ensure conformity with Provincial requirements.

The Laboratory also provided technical assistance to industry in the production of cod liver oil, cod liver solubles, and fish meal, as well as in canning, filleting and freezing operations.

NEWFOUNDLAND BAIT SERVICE

There was further extension of the facilities of the Bait Service in 1961. Prefabricated bait holding units were established at Red Island, Lark Harbour, Piccadilly, Daniel's Harbour, Brig Bay, Bridgeport, and Rencontre East. In December, one of the two units at Rencontre East was moved to Bay L'Argent from where it is felt, a greater number of fishermen will be served.

Installation of eight more prefabricated holding units is planned for 1962. The locations will be announced shortly. In addition, another refrigerated bait truck is to be acquired for operation out of Port aux Choix to supply the units along the North West Coast.

In the past three years the facilities supplying frozen bait for the inshore fishery have been increased from 20 outlets to 40, with two commercial fishery firms supplying bait from three establishments receiving financial assistance under the Frozen Bait Storage Assistance Regulations.

During May and early June requirements of herring bait were purchased in the St. Mary's Bay area and frozen in the Avalon depots of St. Mary's, Ferryland and Long Harbour. Purchase of caplin bait followed and by mid-July adequate stocks had been frozen. Early strikes of squid on the Southwest Coast permitted purchases of this species to begin in late July, and satisfactory showing of squid and a continuing supply at practically all the major depots resulted in adequate stocks of excellent quality.

Distribution of frozen bait has been made by M/V "Arctica" to the Southwest Coast depots in preparation for the winter fishery. The depot at Port au Choix, on the Northwest

Coast, has been stocked with herring bait for the spring lobster fishery, and all northern depots are well stocked with squid.

Generally, stocks of frozen squid and herring are considered sufficient to meet requirements of the inshore fishery through the winter and spring seasons until new supplies are procurable.

FISHERMEN'S INDEMNITY PLAN

Fishing Vessel Insurance

During the year, 372 new policies were issued on vessels with an aggregate appraised value of \$673,000. Policy renewals in the same period totalled 789 valued at \$1,198,000. Indemnity payments arising out of 26 loss and damage claims amounted to \$34,000.

Lobster Trap Insurance.

A total of 24,600 lobster traps were insured of which 12,600 were lost, resulting in indemnity payments of \$9,300.

Salt Assistance Programme

Payments to Newfoundland fishermen and processors under the Salt Assistance Programme amounted to \$484,000. This compares with \$414,200 in the previous year.

CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICE

PROTECTION BRANCH

Sport Fishing

Despite low water conditions, salmon anglers enjoyed a moderately successful season. The catch of 17,000 fish was approximately 1,000 less than the total taken in the previous year. Average weight was 4.6 pounds, while the largest salmon recorded in the season's catch was 32 pounds (taken from the Lower Humber).

The forest fire situation curtailed the angling effort on the east coast. For a two-week period forest travel was prohibited on the Avalon and Burin Peninsulas. This was a contributing factor in the reduced catch.

Water levels were extremely low in practically all sections for the greater part of the season, with the result that salmon were obliged to remain in tidal waters for lengthy periods before migrating upstream to spawning areas.

Protection Activities.

In a continuing educational program, discussions were held with fishermen and lectures given in schools, emphasizing the need for conservation measures.

It was found in the commercial salmon fishery that in several areas the regulation governing mesh size of nets was not being observed. However, fishermen generally adhered to the weekend tie-up regulation and there were but few infractions.

Lobster fishermen, apparently convinced of the seriousness of taking spawn-bearing lobsters, co-operated fully on this score, but there were breaches of the regulations with respect to minimum size limit. In effect for the first time in Newfoundland, the system of licensing lobster fishermen met with general approval.

Regular inspection of deep-sea fishing gear in accordance with ICNAF Regulations was maintained by Officers assigned to the various fresh fish processing plants. The regulations specify a minimum mesh size for haddock and cod dragging operations.

There were 175 prosecutions for breaches of the Newfoundland Fishery Regulations. In the majority of cases the offences were of a minor nature, and fines ranged from \$5 to \$50. Several serious violations resulted in substantial fines.

Bay Seal Bounty

Bounty payments amounting to approximately \$7,000 were made to hunters in Newfoundland and Labrador for bay seals killed.

Patrol Vessels

A fleet of 12 patrol vessels was in service. The larger and more powerful craft were assigned to offshore patrol in areas where trawlers and draggers were operating, while the smaller units were engaged on protection and inspection work along the coasts. An addition to the fleet, the 65-foot "Garia Bay", was commissioned in the early spring, and a 179-foot steel vessel, the "Cape Freels", is scheduled to be launched early in the new year.

FISH CULTURE DEVELOPMENT BRANCH

Exploits River Investigations

A program of investigation undertaken three years ago was continued in 1961 and it can now be said that the major survey work has been completed. The results of the various investigations will now be analysed to determine the feasibility of implementing remedial measures.

Indian River

The Bowater Corporation is engaged at present in diverting part of the headwaters of Indian River to the Grand Lake watershed as a source of additional supply for their Deer Lake powerhouse and also to facilitate movement of pulpwood to the Corner Brook mill from the upper Indian River watershed. Measures to ensure maintenance of fish stocks in this important salmon producing river have been recommended to the Minister of Fisheries for approval. These provisions, involving expenditure by the Department and Bowaters, will make it possible for the existing salmon run to Indian River to maintain itself after the diversion is completed.

Rattling Brook, Norris Arm

Major portion of the salmon run to Rattling Brook has now been transferred to Great Rattling Brook. The transfer, which began in 1956, was necessitated by hydro-development. In 1962 the major effort will be to determine numbers of juvenile fish migrating seaward, and in subsequent years a detailed check will be made to determine the adult return.

Pollution Surveys

During the past year, pollution investigations were carried out as follows:

Exploits River - between Grand Falls and the estuary, Tilt Cove, Little Bay, Red Indian Lake and Holyrood. Discussions continue between the Department and mining concerns at Wabush and Carol Lakes with reference to the wastes from iron ore developments in the Labrador area insofar as they affect the inland fishery interest.

Engineering Construction

Work under this heading included necessary alterations to a fishway on the Upper Falls of Terra Nova River, blasting of an obstruction on Isle aux Morts River, and construction of a foundation in a tributary of Great Rattling Brook to facilitate enumeration of salmon smolts in 1962.

Engineering Surveys

Main effort of engineering survey teams was concentrated on major obstructions on the Humber River. Surveys included Big Falls, Taylor's Brook Falls, Main River Falls, and Adie's Lake Dam. In addition, surveys were carried out on Bernard's Brook, a tributary of Conne River, Bay D'Espoir, and on Bay De L'Eau and Taylor's Bay Brooks on the Burin Peninsula,

Lake Investigations

Generalized surveys to determine the species of fish present, probable productivity, and other useful information, was carried out on 10 lakes, including Gambo Pond, Red Indian Lake, Deer Lake, and George's Lake. A special survey was made of Butt's Pond to gain additional information on the life history of landlocked Arctic char in this province. In the lake surveys the most common species found were speckled trout, landlocked salmon, landlocked Arctic char, smelts, and sticklebacks. Many waters, especially the larger ones, seem to contain good populations of landlocked salmon which are very little fished at present. It is apparent from the investigations that the Island contains an extensive, easily accessible, sport fishery resource that can probably support much more fishing pressure than it is presently getting. This is particularly true of larger waters.

General

Community Stages

Contracts were let for the construction of community stages at William's Harbour and Portugal Cove South and completion of the stage at Point Lance. Those at William's Harbour and Point Lance have been completed and work on the unit at Portugal Cove South is proceeding on schedule. All twenty units will be ready for operation next season. It is planned to commence construction of similar facilities at West St. Modeste next spring. This project is being carried out jointly by the Federal and Provincial Departments and construction will be supervised by the Department of Public Works.

Those stages that operated in 1961 produced an excellent quality of fish and the fishermen concerned are quite pleased with the facilities. Some thought has been given the desirability of continuing the training program for fishermen particularly in those communities where stages have been built but which have not yet gone into operation.

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