



Town Shellfish Crier
August 14, 2020

1. CARES Act Relief for Shellfish Farmers (Aquaculture Sector) BUT all should read

The Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries has sent out applications to all propagation permit holders for CARES Act relief funds to assist shellfish farmers with losses due to COVID-19. MADMF thought it would be helpful to provide a few clarifications about the minimum requirements and application specifics.

- In the last bullet of the cover letter, where it says "Assistance...must not make the applicant more than whole," it is referring to the entire year (2020), not for the specific time period where you have been asked to demonstrate losses (March 15-June 30, 2020). It seems that the shellfish sector of the seafood industry has been hit the hardest due to the collapse of restaurant markets and prices per piece. DMF feels it will be difficult for anyone to be made whole given the conditions, and therefore, everyone should apply.
- In Section 2: PERMIT QUALIFICATION – If you feel that the dealer data provided here as reported by SAFIS does not match your records, you can and should appeal and provide your own documentation of your landings values.
- Seed sales are NOT Captured in the SAFIS dealer data, so if you had a propagation permit endorsement that allowed you to sell seed, you should appeal and include that revenue information as well.
- In Section 3: REVENUE LOSS, in order to qualify for relief funds, you are asked to demonstrate at least a 35% revenue loss in the time period of March 15-June 30, 2020 as compared to your prior five-year average. DMF has provided us with a [percentage calculation "cheat sheet"](#) to explain how to calculate your losses.
- **If you operate a shellfish farm, but also harvest from the wild, you will also be eligible for another segment of relief for commercial fishermen. Those applications will be sent out once the aquaculture sector relief period has concluded. If you are a grower-dealer, there is still another allocation of relief money for seafood processors that will be released. These are three separate pots of assistance, and you will need to document your involvement in each separately, but you are entitled to any that you participate in as long as you meet the specific requirements of each.**
- In total, \$1.15M has been allocated to shellfish farmers, which approximately 400 propagation permit holders could be entitled to, \$11.8M has been allocated to the commercial fishing industry, made up of about 8,000 participants, and \$13.8M was allocated to seafood processors. **The aquaculture dollar amount seems small compared to the commercial figure, however, there are many less participants, so it is certainly worthwhile to apply as the relief may be even greater per individual than the commercial sector.**

- **The deadline to apply is August 21. Applications must be postmarked by this date.**
For more info, visit www.mass.gov/dmf/cares. If you have specific questions, please email DMF at dmf.caresrelief@mass.gov and someone will get right back to you.

Contact Nancy at nancy.civetta@wellfleet-ma.gov or 617-901-7193 with ideas on how the Shellfish Department can help or improve shellfishing, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you!

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