

# SEA HARVEST NEWS

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## TED Exemption Extended

The National Marine Fishery Service has extended the TED exemption through November 23, 2005. Starting November 1, tow times were limited to 75 minutes for nets with no TEDS. The exemption is in effect for the north-central Gulf Coast beginning at the Alabama-Florida line and West to the Brazoria-Matagorda county line in Texas.

## Gulf Council Meeting to Discuss Red Snapper and Shrimp Bycatch

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will meet November 14 – 17 in Fort Walton Beach, Florida at the Ramada Plaza Beach Resort, 1500 Miracle Strip Parkway Southeast. Shrimp and red snapper fishermen will be particularly interested in the joint Reef Fish/Shrimp Committee meeting Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. The two committees will discuss a number of matters relating to red snapper management in the recreational and commercial fisheries as well as red snapper bycatch in the shrimp fishery. This is not a public hearing but information developed in the Joint Committee meeting will set the tone for changes in the red snapper fishery and the shrimp fishery.

The full Council will be taking public testimony on red snapper Individual Fishing Quotas (IFQs), an amendment on red grouper regulations, and exempted fishery permits Wednesday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

## SBA Disaster Loans

The deadlines for applying for SBA disaster loans in Alabama were extended. The deadline for applications for Physical Damage to homes, personal

property, and businesses is now January 11, 2006. The filing deadline for Economic Injury is now May 29, 2006.

Under Physical Damage, there are two types of loans.

1. Home disaster loans are loans to home owners or renters to repair or replace disaster damage to real estate or personal property owned by the victim. Renters are eligible for their personal property losses.
2. Business physical disaster loans are loans to businesses to repair or replace disaster damage to replace the property owned by the business, including real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory and supplies. Businesses of any size are eligible. Non-profit organizations such as charities, churches, private universities etc. are also eligible.

Economic Injury disaster loans are loans for working capital to small businesses and small agricultural cooperatives to assist them through the disaster recovery period. This assistance is available only to applicants with no credit available elsewhere if the business and its owners cannot provide for their own recovery from non-government sources.

For more information call 1-800-659-2955 or go to the website at:  
[http://www.sba.gov/disaster\\_recov/katrinafactsheets.html](http://www.sba.gov/disaster_recov/katrinafactsheets.html).

## International Trade Commission Supports Shrimpers

The U.S. International Trade Commission voted not to revoke antidumping duties that had been imposed in January 2005 on imports of frozen warm water shrimp from Thailand and India. The matter had been reexamined as a result of the December 2004 tsunami, in what is known as a “Changed Circumstances Review” of an existing dumping or countervailing duty order. As a result, the existing antidumping duties remain in place.

According to Seafood Trend Newsletter, Thailand exported 206 million pounds of shrimp to the US from January to August 2004. This represents a 24%

increase over the same period last year. Shrimp landings from the Gulf of Mexico average around 240 million pounds heads-on in recent years.

India exported 48.5 million pounds to the U.S. from January – August compared to about 60 million pounds for the same period in 2003 and 2004.

## Circle Hooks and Winter Fishing

Circle hooks have a proven record of reducing the number of gut-hooked fish for most species. Fewer gut-hooked fish means higher survival of under-sized fish or fish caught during a closed season. Fishermen who are not using circle hooks now should consider using them starting this winter.

During the winter, the recreational red snapper season is closed until April 21st and no red grouper can be harvested until January 1. All grouper and red snapper have a length limit. The use of circle hooks helps ensure that winter-caught red snapper, red grouper and undersized grouper such as gag can be released to fight another day.

## Fish Venting

Anytime fishermen are releasing reef fish caught in more than about 60 to 70 feet of water, they should be prepared to vent the fish. Most reef fish have a swim bladder which is a gas-filled organ lying along the back bone above the stomach. When fish are brought rapidly to the surface, the swim bladder expands rapidly and sometimes bursts. Gases released into the body cavity result in the fish not being able to easily leave the surface.

The remedy is to release the gas from the body cavity by using a 16 gauge needle on a large syringe with the plunger removed. Insert the needle just behind the edge of the pectoral fin (the fin on the side just behind the head) at a

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45 degree angle into the body cavity. You can actually hear the gas escaping through the syringe.

Anything but a hollow needle causes more damage than good. Knives, ice picks etc. don't work.

If something is protruding from the fish's mouth, it is not the swim bladder but the stomach. Do not puncture the stomach but release gas from the body cavity as described above.

Proper use of circle hooks and venting tools can return a lot of fish safely back to the water.