



Notice to PEI Harvesters – Department of Fisheries & Oceans (DFO) Atlantic Mackerel Sampling 2026

CAPTAINS/VESSELS FOR HIRE

On March 30th, 2022, DFO announced that there would be no directed commercial fisheries for Atlantic Mackerel. In the event of possible continued closure in 2026, DFO Science is requesting harvester participation in sample collection.

The goal of the 2026 sampling project is to characterize the population (rather than the catch, as prior to the fishery closure) through the implementation of an index fishery. Samples can be used for a variety of goals: an index of the population age- and length structure, weight-at-age, maturity-at-age, analyses of the spawning season (essential in the calculation of the Total Egg Production index) as well as to support other potential research projects (ie. genetics, fecundity, etc.)

PEI Harvesters in all three lobster fishing areas (LFAs 24, 25, 26A) are eligible for this project.

The PEIFA is seeking up to 2 Captains for the HANDLINE portion of this project:

Hired Captains (2 maximum) will handline to collect the required samples (total number yet to be determined). Each scientific sample would include a length frequency of at least 150 fish. There will be no size limit for mackerel caught. The weight of the entire catch in pursuit of each sample must be reported. The PEI Fishermen's Association will supply science technicians for sampling.

The following are a list of details/requirements for the participants interested in the HANDLINE portion of the project (details are listed on the PEIFA website):

- **Payment: \$1230/sample + 300kg of mackerel**
- **A minimum of 150 fish must be caught to be considered a successful sample**
- **Payment will only be made for successful trips**
- **The PEIFA will supply a technician to sample mackerel**
- **Captain is required to have proven activity in at least one of the past 5 years (hailed in with fish) of the commercial mackerel fishery**
- **Vessel is required to meet all standard Transport Canada requirements**
- **The Captain may require third-party liability insurance on his vessel (in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 per occurrence on his vessel); dependent on DFO contracts.**
- **The Captain may require crew liability insurance if not covered by workers compensation, dependent on DFO contracts.**

- The Captain will be required to sign a contract with the DFO (agreeing on protocol, rate of pay and insurance)
- Captains must be willing to work closely with project staff
- A draw of qualified applicants will be made if more than 2 persons apply

The PEIFA is seeking up to 2 Captains for the DRIFTNET portion of this project:

The hired Captain(s) (2 maximum) will set 10 nets, having one sample/trip per week. Number of samples and distribution are yet to be determined. Each scientific sample would include a length frequency of at least 150 fish. There will be no size limit for mackerel caught. The weight of the entire catch in pursuit of each sample must be reported. The PEI Fishermen's Association will supply technicians for sampling.

The following is a list of details/requirements for the participants interested in the DRIFTNETTING portion of the project (details are listed on the PEIFA website):

- **Payment: \$2130/sample + 300kg of mackerel**
- **A minimum of 150 fish must be caught to be considered a successful sample**
- **Payment will only be made for successful trips**
- **The PEIFA will supply a science technician to sample mackerel**
- **Captain is required to have proven activity in at least one of the past 5 years (hailed in with fish) of the commercial mackerel fishery**
- **Vessel is required to meet all standard Transport Canada requirements**
- **The Captain may require third-party liability insurance on his vessel (in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 per occurrence on his vessel); dependent on DFO contracts.**
- **The Captain may require crew liability insurance if not covered by workers compensation, dependent on DFO contracts.**
- **The Captain will be required to sign a contract with the DFO (agreeing on protocol, rate of pay and insurance)**
- **Captains must be willing to work closely with project staff**
- **A draw of qualified applicants will be made if more than 1 person apply**

A registration and draw will be administered by the PEIFA to determine the participants for both the handline and driftnet portions of the project.

Registration Dates:	8:30 AM, April 9th, 2025, until 4:30 PM, April 16th, 2026
Fee:	No fee for registration
How to Register:	Fishers can register online at www.peifa.org by clicking the 'Mackerel Sampling Registration 2026' link under 'Registrations & Renewals' or contact the PEIFA office to register by phone or in person.
Required Information:	Fisher's name, phone #, FIN #, homeport, vessel name, VRN#.

The Draw will be held on April 17th, 2026 after the completion of the Registration.

Any questions on the project details, please contact Melanie Giffin, Marine Biologist with the PEIFA @ 902-330-4466 or melanie@peifa.org

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