

We are Maine's community-based fishermen working tirelessly to protect our fishing heritage, coastal communities, and the Gulf of Maine. As marine stewards, we fight to provide a sustainable future for fishermen, support our families, and deliver a healthy, local food source to Maine.

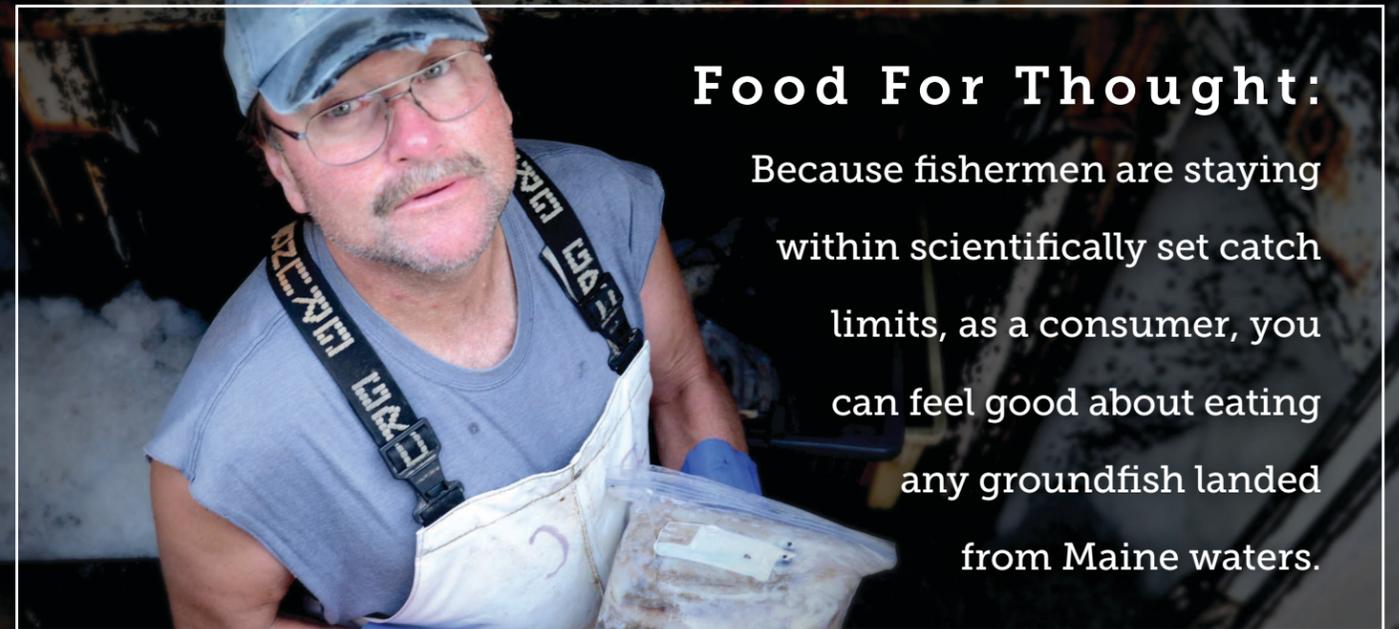


**"We Are Maine's Community-Based Fishermen."**



## We are Maine's community-based fishermen.

The **Maine Coast Fishermen's Association** is an industry based **nonprofit** that identifies and fosters ways to **restore** the **fisheries** of the **Gulf of Maine** and sustain **Maine's fishing communities** for future **generations**. Founded in 2006 by small-boat fishermen out of Port Clyde in response to a shifting ecosystem that was putting our way of life at risk. We now work with fishermen throughout the state to ensure a future for Maine's fishing communities.



## Food For Thought:

Because fishermen are staying within scientifically set catch limits, as a consumer, you can feel good about eating any groundfish landed from Maine waters.

# Fisheries Management & Policy

## Groundfish

Are a group of species that live near the ocean floor. They include "roundfish" like cod, haddock, and pollock as well as "flatfish" or flounders such as American plaice, grey sole, and halibut.



The Maine Coast Fishermen's Association (MCFA) was founded to be the voice of Maine's community-based fishermen in the policy arena. MCFA advocates for stewardship-focused policies that balance protecting the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and sustaining Maine's fishing communities for future generations.

## Groundfish & Sector Management

Groundfish are managed through an allocation-based system called "sectors" which utilize scientifically set catch limits and rely on fishermen to work together to stay within those limits. MCFA manages the Maine Coast Community Sector, which represents one-third of all landings in Maine or half the state's total groundfish revenue since 2010.

Twenty-five years ago, there were over 300 groundfish fishermen in Maine. Currently, the number stands at 51 active vessels in our state. This decline reflects the largest reduction in effort out of any state in New England.



# Scallops

The scallop fishery is the one of the most valuable fisheries in the United States. While Maine's small-boats historically have had very little access to this fishery, in recent years the Gulf of Maine has seen a rebound in this resource. In 2013, MCFA started a new program to work with scallop fishermen to promote stewardship driven policies that will create a long-term sustainable fishery in Maine.



## Forage Fish



Forage fish such as herring, river herring, and menhaden are the foundation blocks for the Gulf of Maine ecosystem. Just as we eat what our fishermen catch, those fish in turn need ample, healthy forage stocks available throughout the ecosystem. Through policy initiatives, MCFA is working to ensure these smaller fish are not over harvested and keep the marine food web from being disrupted.

**Eat Local.  
Eat Healthy.**

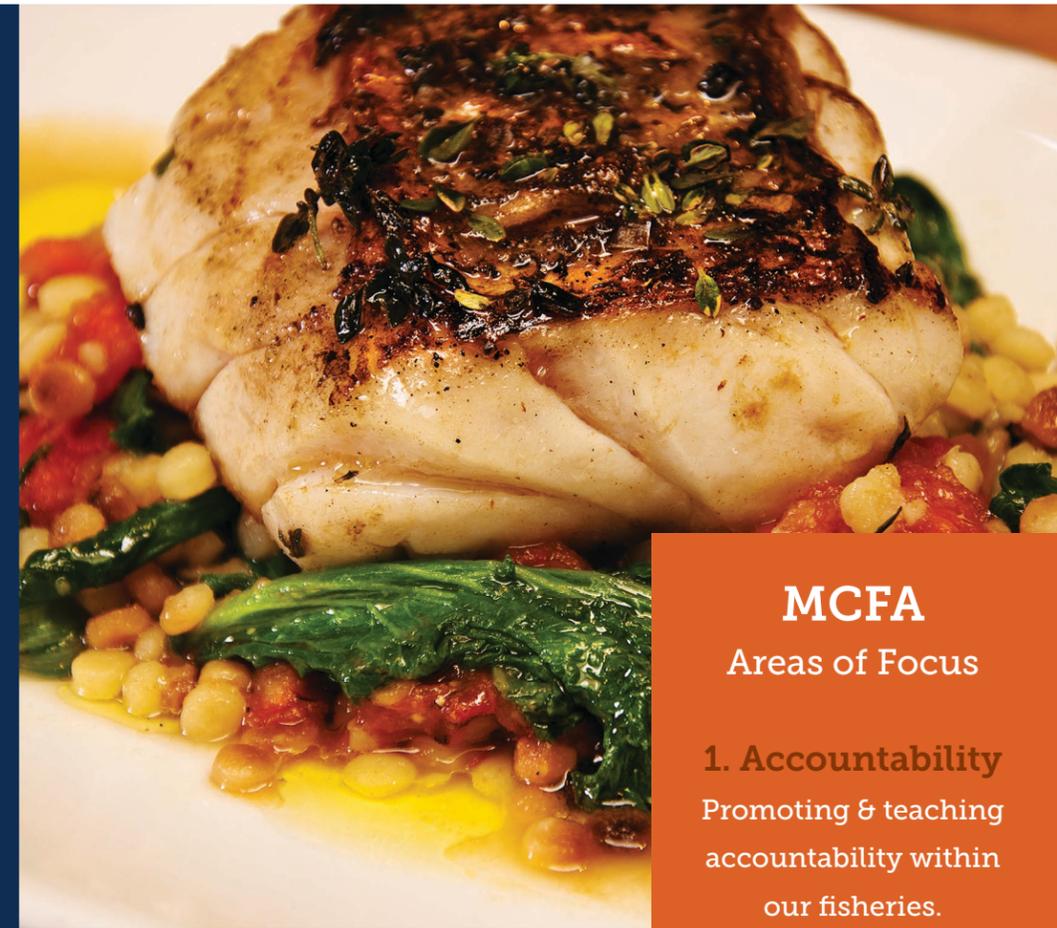
Local seafood is good  
for the environment,  
the community,  
the economy,  
and your health.

# Seafood Program

The 'local food movement' is alive and well in Maine: farmers' markets are popping up all over the state, and more restaurants than ever are adopting local, farm-to-table philosophies. However, seafood is too often left out of this growing economic trend. MCFA's new Seafood Program is working to build connections between Maine's seafood producers and our vibrant local food network with education, outreach, events, and understanding seafood trends.

## Iodine Deficiency

Seafood like cod, shellfish, sea vegetables, and shrimp are an excellent source of iodine. Iodine deficiency is a problem throughout much of the world and has been linked to problems such as thyroid disorders and breast cancer. Iodized salt is not an adequate source of iodine, so eat lots of seafood!



## MCFA

### Areas of Focus

- 1. Accountability**  
Promoting & teaching accountability within our fisheries.
- 2. Reduce**  
Reducing bycatch, helping to ensure future stock.
- 3. Protect**  
Protecting vital habitat, forage fish, and Maine's fishing communities.

## Fishing Communities Coalition

When it comes to getting work done in Washington, D.C., there is certainly strength in numbers. This is why MCFA helped found the Fishing Communities Coalition (FCC), a group of conservation-minded fishing industry groups from all corners of the United States. The FCC's partner organizations work together to promote healthy oceans and a better future for American fishermen.

# Sharing & Preserving

mainecoastfishermen.org

## Permit Banking

In partnership with The Nature Conservancy and the Island Institute, MCFA has begun to develop the Maine Coast Fisheries Trust, a permit bank which will ensure access for the fishermen of today and tomorrow in Maine. To combat the severe market disadvantage currently faced by small-boat fishermen, we are working to acquire permits to hold in perpetuity. These permits are the key to providing increased fishing opportunities for Maine fishermen to ensure we protect their culture and way of life.

**A bunch of fishermen think the ocean is changing. We deal with it every season – something different, something new that wasn't there before. It needs to be talked about so we are able to work with it.**

Gerry Cushman,  
F/V Bug Catcha



## Research and Fisheries Innovation

Fishing is one of the oldest industries in North America, but that doesn't mean we should stay stuck in the past.

Research, innovation, and adaptation are crucial to the success of Maine's small boats and MCFA empowers fishermen to experiment with new gear and techniques to target healthy fish stocks, save on fuel, and share information. MCFA fishermen are on the cutting edge of new fishery technologies like electronic monitoring and electronic jigging machines, which allow them to fish smarter, not harder while harvesting the best tasting seafood in the world.

MCFA is leading the charge in replacing human observers with cameras to create a more cost-effective and accountable fleet. Bringing our historic fleet into the 21st century.



## Changing Oceans

A future with an unpredictable, increasingly warming Gulf of Maine ecosystem is likely to have negative impacts on many Maine industries. No more so than for the fishing industry, which is dependent on predictable natural cycles and functioning environmental systems. Fishermen are keen observers of the environment, and allowing them to share their stories and experiences can reveal realities that are often obscured by data. Faced with this predicament, we strongly believe in empowering fishermen to act as advocates for climate change awareness.

MCFA has created platforms for local fishermen to discuss what they are observing on our changing waters. You can visit our website [mainecoastfishermen.org](http://mainecoastfishermen.org) to view a short video of one of our climate change focused events.

## MCFA Oral History Project & Maine Coast Dock Talk Podcast

Maine's fishermen have more to offer than just delicious seafood: they are also the source of endless stories about life on the water. Maine's culture is explicitly tied to its coast. Each one of these communities, boats, and captains has a tale to be told. We often look at our rocky shores and assume the granite will hold and that everything is the same today as it was yesterday, but much like the consistent pressure of ocean erodes, so does our history and culture.

To bring these stories to you, MCFA started its Oral History Project in 2013 and launched the Maine Coast Dock Talk podcast in 2016, bringing the coast of Maine to your smartphone – wherever you are.



The original founders of the Midcoast Fishermen's Association which became the Maine Coast Fishermen's Association in 2011. Photo includes (Back row) Justin Libby, Roger Libby, Gary Libby, Jim Frank, Glen Libby, Glen Hall (Front row) Matty Thompson, Eddie Thorbjornson, Randy Cushman, Gerry Cushman.



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