

SEA GRANT PROGRAM



LAGNIAPPE

TROTLINES, BUSHLINES AND LONGLINES NEED LICENSE

Under the new licensing laws passed several years ago, all commercial fishermen had to license themselves, their boats (below the saltwater line) and their gear. Some gear types were excluded at that time.

Under a new law passed last year, all forms of commercial gear must be now licensed as miscellaneous fishing gear. This includes trotlines, longlines, bushlines, minnow traps, eel pots, cans, drums, and anything else that doesn't have a specified gear license.

The license costs \$25 and may be purchased with the fishermen's personal license.

THE FUTURE OF TUNA

A few years ago, the only tuna found on a Louisiana fishing boat were in a can in the galley. Now they play a very important role in the economy of the state's fishery. The state's number one fishery, shrimp, is in serious financial trouble, especially offshore. Some people blame the natural shrimp cycle, and others feel that the continual loss of our marshlands is finally showing up in less shrimp production.

In any case, many offshore shrimpers have converted to tuna fishing in order to survive. The figures below speak for themselves.

	<u>YELLOWFIN</u>			<u>BLUEFIN</u>		
	total lbs.	total value	price per lb.	total lbs.	total value	price per lb.
1984	35	\$ 7	\$.20	0	0	0
1985	226,910	\$ 332,769	\$1.47	40,090	\$ 99,488	\$2.48
1986	2,435,014	\$ 3,231,617	\$1.33	156,067	\$ 474,512	\$3.04
1987	5,625,426	\$10,785,214	\$1.92	298,379	\$1,315,180	\$4.41

Some people see this kind of growth as a fisheries development dream, adding millions of dollars to the state's hard-pressed economy from a previously under-utilized fish. Others see this growth as an example of overfishing, just waiting to happen. Who is right? If yellowfin tuna stocks can handle a 25 million pound harvest, we are hardly denting them. If it can only handle a 2.5 million pound harvest, we are overfishing.

In either case, it is out of the hands of state and federal fisheries agencies. Tunas are found outside of state waters and therefore, not under the jurisdiction of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. When the Magnuson Act created the 200 mile limit and the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council, tunas were specifically taken from the council's control.

The reasoning for this was that since tunas are so migratory that they cross the Atlantic at the drop of a hat, they were best managed by international agreements. The organization which does manage tuna is the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna, better known as ICCAT. The United States is one of 23 nations represented on ICCAT.

This past fall ICCAT met to decide the future of the bluefin tuna fishery. The U.S. delegates went to the meeting prepared to push for a zero quota on the Atlantic bluefin tuna fishery (this includes the Gulf of Mexico). After three days of meetings, ICCAT recommended keeping the harvest at present level for this year.

While yellowfin tuna is the main fish in the Gulf tuna fishery, the occasional catch of a large, valuable bluefin tuna is a welcome economic bonus to tuna fishermen, at least until the annual quota is filled (usually early spring). Yellowfin tuna as well as blackfin and bigeye tuna also come under the control of ICCAT at the present time. This may change, as several organizations in this country are pushing to include tunas in the Magnuson Act and put them under the regional councils' control. For the present time, however, tuna will stay the same.

FUEL TAX LAW CHANGED

As of January 1, 1989, the federal fuel tax exemption for commercial fishermen is back in effect. Vessel owners who paid the 15.1¢ per gallon tax on diesel (or 9.1¢ on gasoline) may get a refund using form 4136 and filing it with their 1988 income taxes.

A commercial fishermen may also get interest on his refund if his refund works out to \$1000 or less per quarter and he uses form 843 to file by the quarter.

SNAPPER-GROUPER REGULATIONS PROPOSED

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is considering proposals to seriously reduce the catch of snappers and groupers. These proposals would reduce the sport catch of snappers by 45%, the commercial catch of snappers by 60% and the total catch of groupers by 20%. Public hearings on these proposals will be held in late February or early March.

- * A yearly commercial quota of 2,144,000 pounds for red snapper in the Gulf.
- * A minimum size limit of 12 inches total length for red, yellowtail, mutton and gray snappers and an 8 inch minimum size on vermilion (b-liner) and Lane snappers.
- * A minimum size limit of 20 inches for black, gag, red, yellowfin and Nassau groupers.
- * A minimum size limit of 50 inches for jewfish.
- * A daily sport and trawl bag limit of five groupers and ten snappers, no more than five of which can be red snappers.
- * A minimum size of 28 inches fork length on amberjack and a daily bag limit of three, with a commercial quota of 829,000 pounds.
- * Yearly commercial quotas on groupers:
 - 1,658,000 lbs. for black and gag groupers
 - 6,170,000 lbs. for red groupers
 - 1,381,000 lbs. for all other groupers (including the yellowedge) except jewfish
- * Banning bottom longlines for reef fish inside of 50 fathoms
- * Banning fish traps and entangling nets for reef fish in federal waters
- * To get a commercial permit, a person must make 50% or more of his income from commercial fishing

According to a Federal Fisheries News Bulletin, record numbers of dead Kemp's ridley sea turtles are washing up on Florida and Georgia beaches. According to the bulletin, 62 of the turtles have been found dead since October 13. This is eight times the usual number. In addition to the Kemp's ridley turtles, 15 loggerhead and two leatherback turtles have been stranded. No definite cause for their death has been found.

TED regulations are still scheduled to go into effect in Louisiana on May 1 of this year. The regulations will require all shrimp boats inside and boats under 25 feet offshore to limit their tows to 90 minutes or less. All offshore shrimpers with boats over 25 feet long will be required to use TEDs in their nets.

JEFFERSON BUSINESSES TO GET CONTRACT HELP

The Jefferson Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) will be assisting businesses including, seafood businesses, land federal contracts. Phylis McLaren, who will be director of the JEDCO bid center, will search for bid opportunities that match parish businesses. She will also work to get firms on the government bid list.

Seafood businesses who want to do federal business, must pass Department of Commerce inspection. Phylis will also guide a business through the inspection procedure. She has a good deal of experience in this work. In her previous job in Texas, she helped developed more than \$10 million in new government contracts for an area with only one-third the population of Jefferson Parish.

Businessmen who would like assistance, should contact:

Phylis McLaren
Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission
1221 Elmwood Park Blvd.
Suite 405
Jefferson, LA 70121
(504) 736-6550

THE GUMBO POT
Gaspergou Au Gratin

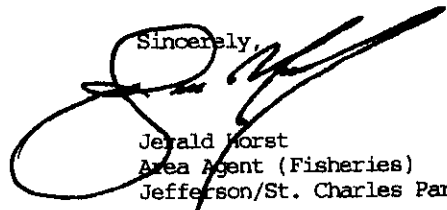
I adapted this recipe from one designed for black drum. Gaspergou is simply a freshwater drum. It is inexpensive and never has parasites.

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|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 c. boiled flaked gaspergou | 1 c. grated sharp cheese |
| ¼ c. chopped green pepper | 2 Tbsp. lemon juice |
| 4 Tbsp. margarine | ½ c. bread crumbs |
| 2 Tbsp. plain flour | ½ tsp. salt |
| 1 c. half and half | dash of pepper |

Saute green pepper in half of margarine until tender. Blend in flour, salt and pepper. Add half & half and cook until thick, stirring constantly. Add cheese, lemon juice and fish.

Put mixture in well-greased baking dish. Combine the rest of the margarine and the bread crumbs and sprinkle over the casserole. Bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes or until browned. Serves 4.

Sincerely,



Jerald Horst
Area Agent (Fisheries)
Jefferson/St. Charles Parishes

JH/kwj

LOUISIANA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
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OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Penalty for Private Use, \$300