

Species Fact Sheet: Pacific Ocean Perch



*MSC certified May 2010

- **Latin Name:** *Sebastes alutus*
- **Market/vernacular names:** POP
- **Location:** Aleutian Islands
- **Fishing Gear:** Otter trawls rigged to fish over generally rougher substrates. Rockfish nets are designed to stay off the bottom as much as possible by employing numerous floats to buoy the net body and codend.
- **Season:** January 20 - December 31
- **Catch/TAC:** 2014 catch = 24,947 metric tons / 2015 TAC = 26,217 metric tons. *The Pacific ocean perch fishery is managed by dividing TAC among four different management areas. Catch and TAC information above is reported in aggregate.
- **Products:** H&G (headed and gutted)
- **Size:** Average length to 36 cm, average H&G weight 250-650 grams
- **General Information:** Pacific ocean perch are an important component of Alaska groundfish fisheries, with catches taken primarily from shelf breaks and gullies in the northern Gulf of Alaska and Aleutian Islands region. Pacific ocean perch is harvested mostly by catcher processors, and to a lesser extent, smaller catcher vessels. Catcher processors harvest multiple species, conduct primary processing aboard the vessel, and freeze their products on board.
- **Management:** In 1976, the U.S. established management for Pacific ocean perch stocks out to 200 miles. Federal fishery management plans, adopted through an open and transparent public process and based on sound science, govern the harvest of Pacific ocean perch. The plan has been amended numerous times to achieve continuous improvement in the performance of the fishery. Fishery managers and scientists follow a precautionary, ecosystem-based approach.
- **Improvements:** Industry and the North Pacific Fishery Management Council developed an alternative to end the current "race for fish." This new system (Amendment 80) went into effect in 2008 and divided the groundfish target quotas and bycatch limits among cooperatives. This new management system makes each group responsible for its own catch and bycatch as well as provides strong incentive for the co-ops to keep bycatch rates low, maximize retention of target catches that can be marketed, and reward those who fish cleanly and efficiently.