





# CAPE COD FISH SEASON-BY-SEASON



FISH	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Black Seabass <sup>1</sup>												
Bluefish												
Butterfish												
Clams <sup>2</sup>												
Cod												
Flounder: Summer Flounder or Fluke <sup>3</sup>												
Flounder: Winter Flounder or Blackback												
Haddock												
Hake												
Lobster <sup>4</sup>												
Mackerel												
Monkfish												
Oysters <sup>5</sup>												
Pollock												
Redfish or Ocean Perch												
Scallops: Bay Scallops												
Scallops: Sea Scallops <sup>6</sup>												
Skate												
Squid <sup>7</sup>												
Striped Bass <sup>8</sup>												
Swordfish												
Tautog <sup>9</sup>												
Tuna: Bluefin Tuna <sup>10</sup>												
Whiting												

 Denotes availability  
 Denotes limited availability

This chart reflects our experience with periods local catch is available at market. Availability also varies in accordance with regulations created by the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries and the National Marine Fisheries Service. They continually study and determine when each type of fish may be legally caught, and at what size, in any given season (see [www.nmfs.noaa.gov/fishwatch](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/fishwatch)). Note also that commercial rules are often different from sport fishing rules.

<sup>1</sup>The August Black Seabass season continues only until quotas are reached. <sup>2</sup>Clams are available year round, but supplies can be more limited during difficult winter weather. <sup>3</sup>Summer flounder, also known as fluke, are found here May to September, but the season is usually shorter, ending when quotas are reached. <sup>4</sup>Lobster inhabit our waters year round, but we see them mainly in summer and fall because handling lobstering gear in heavy winter weather is difficult, also care must be taken to ensure gear stays out of the way of spring right whale migration. <sup>5</sup>Oysters are available year round, but they are somewhat fewer in winter when icy weather makes harvesting difficult. Oysters are plump in late spring-early summer, then again in fall. <sup>6</sup>The sea scallop season opens March 1st. From that point, sea scallops are available until quotas are met, generally all year, with fewer harvested in the harshest winter weather. <sup>7</sup>Squid season goes from January to about September, ending once quotas are reached, but we see it mostly in spring, as squid come and go, moving to evade predators such as bass in the summer months. <sup>8</sup>Striped Bass are found in our waters May through October, but the commercial season is much shorter, starting mid-July until quotas are met, usually mid-August. <sup>9</sup>Tautog has both spring and fall seasons, peaking in fall, when quotas are reached. <sup>10</sup>Bluefin tuna swim Cape Cod Bay June through October. The principal tuna fished here, they are closely regulated at the national level, and the season closes when quotas are reached.



Buy Fresh Buy Local Cape Cod is a program of  
 Cape Cod Cooperative Extension.  
 Connecting you to Cape Cod's freshest from land and sea.  
 Visit [www.BuyFreshBuyLocalCapeCod.org](http://www.BuyFreshBuyLocalCapeCod.org).

With thanks to Mac's Seafood  
 for the information provided in this chart.  
 Know where your fish comes from. ®  
 Visit [www.macsseafood.com](http://www.macsseafood.com).

