



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Immediate Release

Like most industries, the fishery trade will be profoundly affected by war-time conditions. While supplies of fishery products may become short as the war continues, many species are expected in liberal quantities during January and the United States enters the war with record high stocks of a score of frozen fresh- and salt-water species, California and Maine canned sardines, it was reported today to Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes by Director Ira N. Gabrielson, United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

Total cold storage holdings of frozen fish and shellfish as of December 15, 1941, amounted to 117,272,833 pounds, a new all-time high. The greatest increases were noted for the fresh-water and shellfish groups. Holdings of salt-water species were considerably above those of a year ago, but less than holdings of November 15, 1941. However, increases of supplies were recorded for many salt-water species, including cod, haddock, hake, and pollock; butterfish; eels; cod and pollock fillets; mullet; sablefish and red snapper. Fillets of rosefish and haddock were stored in less quantities than last month, but in greater quantities than a year ago. The species of fresh-water fish for which increases in frozen supplies were reported include blue pike and sauger, catfish and bullheads, Lake Erie cisco, chubs, lake herring, lake trout, pike, yellow perch, and whitefish. Increases in the cold storage holdings of shrimp and spiny lobster tails were also indicated.

The production of canned tuna, canned mackerel, and canned shrimp is lagging behind that of last year, but the production of canned sardines in California has set a new record and the pack of Maine sardines also has reached record levels. However, the volume of future production of canned tuna, mackerel, and sardines in California is uncertain as current fishing operations have been somewhat restricted since the beginning of the war.

While the Alaska canned salmon pack during the past season was the third largest in history, distributors' holdings of this item and unsold stocks in the hands of packers show definite downward trends as compared with supplies available at this time last year reflecting largely the impact of lend-lease and military purchases. Distributors' holdings of other canned fish indicated divergent trends. Stocks of tuna are far below those of this time last year, while supplies of Maine sardines were reported double those of a year ago and California sardines were up about 10 percent.

While fishing operations are already restricted in Pacific waters, adequate supplies of local cod, rockfish, salmon, clams, crabs, and shrimp meat are expected for this area.

For regions supplied by the fisheries of the Great Lakes, such species as lake trout, whitefish, sauger pike, yellow perch, lake herring, carp, tullibee, and smelt are expected on the market in quantity. In addition, of course, other major commercial fisheries will supply in liberal quantities many species of fish and shellfish, especially halibut, salmon, sablefish, rosefish, oysters, and shrimp.

From North Atlantic fisheries many regions will receive liberal supplies of such species as haddock, pollock, rosefish, mackerel, whiting, cusk, hake, dabs, gray sole, lemon sole, yellowtail, sea scallops, and clams.

For New York City and the surrounding marketing area, abundant supplies of many species are expected during January. Bluefish, yellowtail, kingfish, scup, Spanish mackerel, hard clams, and oysters are a few which should be liberal in quantity and reasonable in price.

Fisheries of the South Atlantic and Gulf areas will supply quantities of red snapper, spotted sea trout, king whiting, black drum, mullet, king mackerel, bluefish, Spanish mackerel, and shrimp and oysters.

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