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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FRESH FISH SUPPLIES AVAILABLE WITH SECOND QUARTER ACTIVITIES

The fresh fish season is on and for the next six months consumers will have greater freedom of choice between fresh, frozen, and canned fish in markets throughout the country, according to the Commercial Fisheries Outlook, April-June, issued today by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

While some fishing is done in every month of the year, the big harvest begins in the second quarter with several major fisheries reaching peak production during that period.

The North Pacific halibut fishermen begin their season in May and expect to be at peak production by the end of June. Prices probably will be a little higher on the new catch because of decreased holdings. Salmon are being landed now but the landings are light as usual for this time of year. The trolling season in Washington and Oregon begins April 15. Troll-caught salmon in Alaska find a ready market also.

Good seasonal supplies of fresh mackerel, whiting, bluefish, sea bass, shad, striped bass, mullet, red snapper and barracuda will be available at their usual markets at prices dependent upon local supply situations.

Production of shrimp will also increase with a steady market and good demand expected.

Fresh water landings of bullheads, catfish, buffalo fish, carp, smelt and others will be at about the usual level for this time of year. The market for shellfish is generally steady, supplies ample and demand good.

Cold storage holdings of salmon are down in the United States and Canada. The demand is good and with the light supplies the prices will probably remain above

normal. Canned salmon supplies are practically exhausted and the demand far exceeds the supply. Canning of salmon in Bristol Bay, Alaska, will start June 25.

The tuna industry is getting off to a good start. Domestic landings in the first quarter are nearly twice the landings of the like quarter in 1955 but some of this increase was due to delayed unloadings. Albacore, or white-meat tuna, continues in short supply. However, other kinds of tuna are plentiful. Demand usually strengthens at this time of year.

The Maine sardine season begins in April. A better pack is expected than in 1955. Menhaden landings will reach a peak in the South Atlantic and Gulf States area during the quarter and the demand for fish meal and oil is expected to continue strong.

Fish stick and other packaged fish and shellfish producers will be attempting to expand markets by overcoming price competition which has hampered promotional efforts.

The Commercial Fisheries Outlook, April-June, 1956, Fishery Leaflet 336aa, may be secured from the Division of Information, Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington 25, D. C.

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