

REVIEW OF THE PELAGIC WET FISHERIES DURING THE 1966-67 SEASON

One bright feature of the pelagic wet fishery was the developing anchovy reduction fishery in which landings were more than twice the 1965-1966 season. While the value of the calendar 1967 anchovy landings was the greatest since 1956, there was a decline in both landings and value of Pacific mackerel and sardines and a decline in landings only of jack mackerel (Tables 1 and 2). Value of pelagic wet fish to the fleet remained about the same as for the past two seasons.

The activation of retired vessels for the reduction fishery increased the California wet fish fleet to 58 vessels, 4 more than during 1965-66: 25 large purse seiners (60 feet and over), 13 small purse seiners, and 20 lampara vessels. During the season 1 large and 2 small purse seiners fished in central California and 15 lampara boats fished in Monterey Bay. The southern California fleet consisted of 24 large and 11 small purse seiners and 5 lampara vessels. Four of the Southern California vessels occasionally fished in central California.

Sardine (June-May)

On June 6, 1967 the Governor of California signed an emergency bill declaring a two year moratorium on sardine fishing. The law, which allows a 15% tolerance by weight in any load of mixed fish, took effect the following day.

A total of 344 short tons of sardines were landed during the 1966-67 season, the poorest catch in the history of the fishery (Table 2). Landings for central and southern California were 23 and 321 tons respectively. Only 11 catches were pure sardines. Fishermen received from \$200 to \$400 per ton at fresh fish markets and from \$70 to \$75 per ton at canneries; most sardines (about 90%) were used for dead bait. Primary areas of catch were Point Sur, inshore between Point Vicente and Newport Beach, Santa Catalina Island, and La Jolla. The catch was composed almost entirely of large, old fish.

Anchovy

The California Fish and Game Commission again authorized a quota of 75,000 tons of anchovies for re-

duction to be taken from October 1, 1966 through April 30, 1967. Fishing began October 4, 1966 in Monterey Bay. The San Pedro purse seine fleet did not enter the fishery until December 19, 1966. The reduction season closed April 30 with a catch of 37,615 tons. Canning, reduction and fresh fish market landings for calendar 1966 and calendar 1967 were 31,140 tons and 34,000 tons respectively (Table 3).

Primary catch areas for the 1966-67 season were Monterey Bay, Anacapa Island, and the San Pedro Channel. Fishermen received \$20 per ton.

In central California three-year-old fish were dominant in both 1965-66 and 1966-67 reduction fisheries. In southern California two-year-old fish were dominant during both seasons.

Los Angeles-Long Beach Harbor provided almost 50% of the live bait caught during 1966 and 1967. In the 1965-66 and 1966-67 seasons one-year-old fish (1964 and 1965 year-classes respectively) contributed about 50% of the catch. South of San Pedro fish of the year (less than one year old) were the second most important year-class while north of San Pedro they were of lesser importance. The estimated live bait catches for 1966 and 1967 were 6,773 tons and 7,760 tons respectively (Table 4).

Mackerel (May-April)

Pacific mackerel landings continued to decline and only 2,038 tons were landed during the 1966-67 season (Table 5). Most of the catch consisted of fish more than four years old. Fishermen received from \$70 to \$75 per ton for both Pacific and jack mackerel. The primary catch areas for both species were Cortes and Tanner Banks, and San Clemente and Santa Catalina Islands.

The 22,879 ton jack mackerel catch represented a decline of about 50% from the previous season. Fish less than three years old comprised the bulk of the catch. *James E. Hardwick, California Department of Fish and Game.*

TABLE 1
LANDINGS OF PELAGIC WET FISHES IN CALIFORNIA IN SHORT TONS, 1963-1967

Year	Sardines	Anchovies	Pacific Mackerel	Jack Mackerel	Herring	Squid	Total
1963-----	3,566	2,285	20,121	47,721	315	5,780	79,788
1964-----	6,569	2,488	13,414	44,846	175	8,217	75,709
1965-----	962	2,866	3,525	33,333	258	9,310	50,254
1966-----	439	31,140	2,315	20,431	121	9,513	63,959
1967*-----	74	34,000	583	19,046	135	9,800	63,676

* Preliminary.

TABLE 2
VALUE TO FISHERMEN OF WET FISH LANDINGS

Year	Anchovy	Jack Mackerel	Pacific Mackerel	Sardine	Total
1960.....	\$73,816	\$1,582,173	\$757,443	\$1,185,813	\$3,599,245
1961.....	110,083	2,029,236	954,495	1,145,990	4,239,804
1962.....	50,050	1,868,948	1,026,963	490,329	3,436,290
1963.....	77,585	1,989,146	861,316	298,879	3,226,926
1964.....	82,061	2,109,269	666,435	500,149	3,357,914
1965.....	98,799	1,829,432	223,842	125,530	2,277,603
1966.....	643,925	1,424,327	188,510	152,051	2,408,813
1967*.....	703,120	1,428,450	87,450	29,600	2,254,320

* Preliminary.

TABLE 3
SARDINE CATCH IN TONS, 1963-64 THROUGH 1966-67
(Period June Through the Following May)

Year	California	Baja California	Total	Year	California	Baja California	Total
1963-64.....	2,942	18,384	21,326	1965-66.....	729	22,252	22,981
1964-65.....	6,103	27,120	33,223	1966-67*.....	344	19,156	19,500

* Preliminary.

TABLE 4
COMMERCIAL LANDINGS AND LIVE BAIT CATCH OF ANCHOVIES IN SHORT TONS, 1963-1967

Year	Commercial landings	Live-bait	Total	Year	Commercial landings	Live-bait	Total
1963.....	2,285	4,442	6,727	1966.....	31,140	6,773	37,913
1964.....	2,488	5,191	7,679	1967*.....	34,000	7,760	41,760
1965.....	2,866	6,148	9,014				

* Preliminary.

TABLE 5
JACK AND PACIFIC MACKEREL CATCH IN SHORT TONS, 1963-64 THROUGH 1966-67
(Period May through April)

Year	Jack Mackerel	Pacific Mackerel	Year	Jack Mackerel	Pacific Mackerel
1963-64.....	42,038	17,105	1965-66.....	33,831	3,794
1964-65.....	39,548	12,437	1966-67*.....	22,879	2,038

* Preliminary.