

Commercial Fishing Employment and Incomes in Mississippi, Gulf of Mexico, and United States

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Most Valued Commercial Species

Commercial fishing comprises establishments primarily engaged in the commercial catching or taking of finfish, shellfish, or miscellaneous marine products from a natural habitat. (U.S. Bureau of Census, <https://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/index.html>). The most valued species commercially landed in the Gulf of Mexico States are shrimp, menhaden, oyster, blue crabs, spiny lobster, red snapper, red grouper, and others listed in Figure 1.

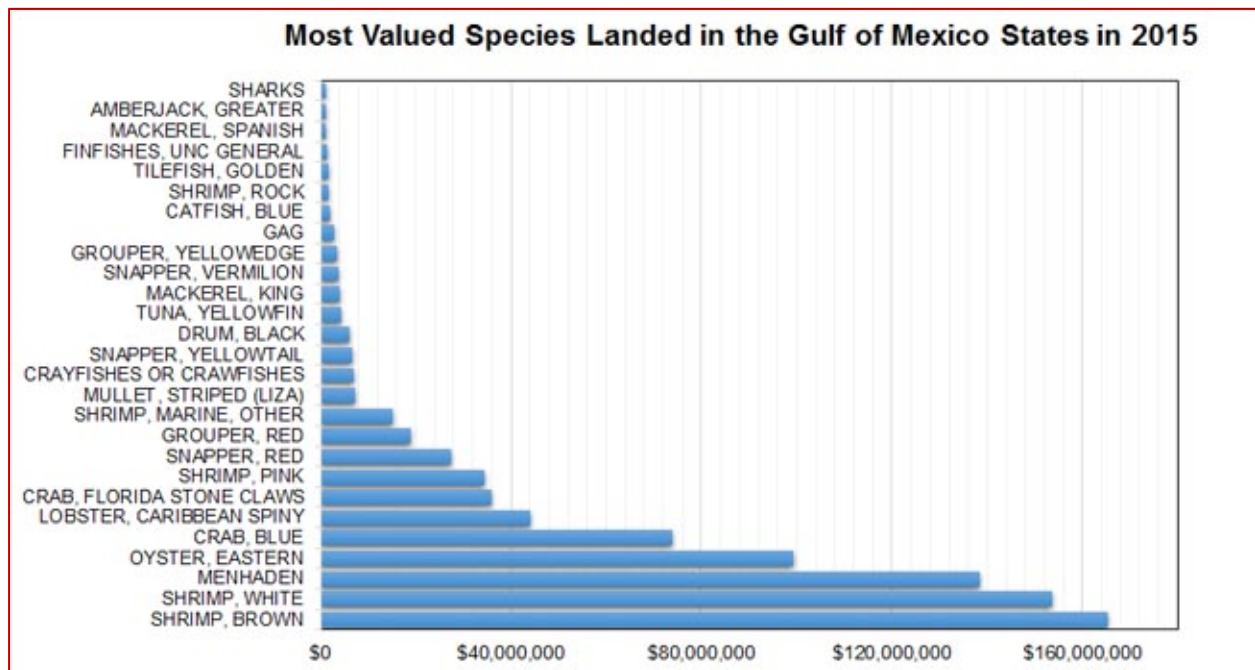


Figure 1. Most Valued Species Commercial Harvested in the Gulf of Mexico States Exceeding \$1 Million in 2015. Source of raw data: NOAA Fisheries. <http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/commercial-fisheries/index>.

Commercial Fishing Employment and Wages, Salaries, and Earnings

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/farming-fishing-and-forestry/fishers-and-related-fishing-workers.htm>), fishers and related fishing workers typically do the following tasks:

1. Locate fish with the use of fish-finding equipment
2. Direct fishing operations and supervise the crew of fishing vessels
3. Steer vessels and operate navigational instruments
4. Maintain engines, fishing gear, and other onboard equipment by making minor repairs
5. Sort, pack and store the catch in holds with ice and other freezing methods
6. Measure fish to ensure that they are of legal size
7. Return undesirable or illegal catches to the water
8. Guide nets, traps, and lines onto vessels by hand or with hoisting equipment
9. Signal other workers to move, hoist, and position loads of the catch

The commercial fishing industry directly provided more than 86,000 jobs per year in the United States all the way through the past 17 years (Figure 2). The five Gulf of Mexico States (AL, FL, LA, MS, and TX) contributed about 27.4 percent of all the fishing jobs during the period. The fishing activities in Mississippi and Alabama added 1.4 and 1.6 percent of the total number of jobs, respectively.

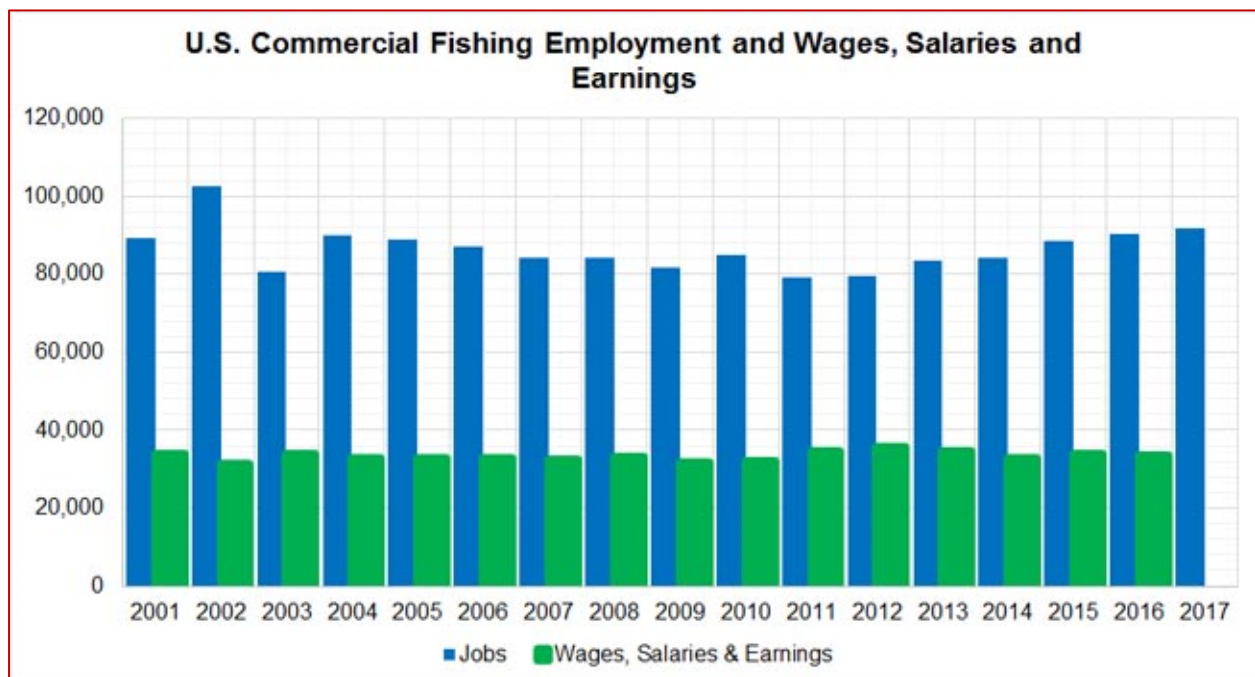


Figure 2. Annual Employment and Wages, Salaries, and Earnings of Commercial Fishing QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, Self-Employed, and Extended Proprietors. QCEW – U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

Source of raw data: EMSI. <https://e.economicmodeling.com>.

The combined wages, salaries, and proprietor earnings (at constant 2016 prices) of all the QCEW employees, non-QCEW employees, self-employed, and extended proprietors averaged more than \$33,000 per person during the past 16 years (Figure 2). The annual pay of fishers and owners of fishing businesses in the five Gulf of Mexico States averaged more than \$23,000 per person or 78.9 percent of the national average. Mississippi and Alabama commercial fishers and boat owners received average annual pay amounting to 92.4 and 73.4 percent of the national average, respectively.

Distribution of Commercial Fishermen by Gender

The 2016 industrial overview released by EMSI (October 2017) showed that among fishers and owners, approximately 93.2 percent were males (Figure 3). About 6.8 percent of the fishing workers and boat owners were females. In the Gulf States, 92.4 percent are males while 7.6 percent are females.

Industry Gender Breakdown	United States		Gulf of Mexico States	
	2016 Jobs	2016 Percent	2016 Jobs	2016 Percent
Males	84,268	93.2%	22,568	92.4%
Females	6,194	6.8%	1,868	7.6%
Total	90,462	100.0%	24,436	100.0%

Figure 3. Distribution of Commercial Fishing QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, Self-Employed, and Extended Proprietors by Gender. QCEW – U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

Source of raw data: EMSI. <https://e.economicmodeling.com>.

Distribution of Commercial Fishermen by Race or Ethnicity

The 2016 industrial overview disseminated by EMSI (October 2017) also categorized the fishers and owners by race or ethnicity (Figure 4). Majority of the workers are Whites (81%), followed by Asians (7.5%), and Native Americans or Alaska Native (5.9%). The rest are Hispanic or Latino (2.4%), African Americans (1%), with two or more races (2%), and Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islander (0.2%). In the Gulf States, relatively more Asians are engaged in commercial fishing.

Industry Race Breakdown	United States		Gulf of Mexico States	
	2016 Jobs	2016 Percent	2016 Jobs	2016 Percent
White	73,259	81.0%	19,461	79.6%
Asian	6,788	7.5%	3,639	14.9%
Native American or Alaska Native	5,312	5.9%	459	1.9%
Hispanic or Latino	2,162	2.4%	456	1.9%
Two or More Races	1,814	2.0%	221	0.9%
Black or African American	937	1.0%	177	0.7%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	190	0.2%	23	0.1%
Total	90,462	100.0%	24,436	100.0%

Figure 4. Distribution of Commercial Fishing QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, Self-Employed, and Extended Proprietors by Race or Ethnicity. QCEW – U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

Source of raw data: EMSI. <https://e.economicmodeling.com>.

Distribution of Commercial Fishermen by Age

The 2016 industrial overview published by EMSI (October 2017) also classified the fishers and owners by age (Figure 5). Almost 3 out of 10 of the fishermen and owners are 55 years old and above. The 45-55 years old fishers and owners consisted of 29.9 percent of the total. The 35-44 years old group added 21.1 percent of the total. The younger fishermen and owners comprised the rest of the fishermen and owners. The commercial fishermen in the Gulf States are relatively older than the national average.

Industry Age Breakdown	United States		Gulf of Mexico States	
	2016 Jobs	2016 Percent	2016 Jobs	2016 Percent
14-18	1,297	1.4%	276	1.1%
19-24	4,148	4.6%	733	3.0%
25-34	12,489	13.8%	2,026	8.3%
35-44	19,119	21.1%	6,622	27.1%
45-54	27,068	29.9%	7,444	30.5%
55-64	19,454	21.5%	5,592	22.9%
65+	6,888	7.6%	1,741	7.1%
Total	90,462	100.0%	24,436	100.0%

Figure 5. Distribution of Commercial Fishing QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, Self-Employed, and Extended Proprietors by Age. QCEW – U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

Source of raw data: EMSI. <https://e.economicmodeling.com>.

Commercial Fishermen Registered in MarketMaker

To create an online database of local fishing (and fish farming) businesses, the following search was done in Mississippi MarketMaker (<https://ms.foodmarketmaker.com/>):

States: AL, AK, AZ, AR, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MS, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NM, NY, NC, ND, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VT, VA, WA, WV, WI, or WY » Type: Fishery »

More than 500 local fishing businesses registered their business profiles in MarketMaker. Click this [LINK](#) to view the search results online. You can sort the results alphabetically, by relevance, or by the distance to your current location.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is MarketMaker?

MarketMaker is the most extensive and most in-depth database of its kind featuring a diverse community of food-related businesses: buyers, farmers/ranchers, fisheries, farmers markets, processors/packers, wineries, restaurants and more. **MarketMaker** provides simple yet powerful search tools to connect with others across the production and distribution chain (<http://ms.foodmarketmaker.com/>).

Where can you find Mississippi MarketMaker?

MarketMaker is located at <http://ms.foodmarketmaker.com/>.

Ask Siri or Cortana to search for “Mississippi MarketMaker” on your smartphone.

How do you register your food business in Mississippi MarketMaker?

Click **Register** and type your email address and a password in the spaces under **Register**. Be prepared to enter information (and pictures) about your business.

What are the benefits of registering your food business in Mississippi MarketMaker?

Producers register their businesses in **MarketMaker** because food buyers of all types access our database to find products and services to meet their specific needs. Through **MarketMaker**, producers can reach more customers and more efficient form successful business alliances.

How do you search for your business profile in Mississippi MarketMaker?

Click **Search** and type the name of your company in the space under **Search MarketMaker**.

How do you update your business profile in Mississippi MarketMaker?

Click **Register** and then click **UPDATE YOUR PROFILE**. Type your email address and password in the spaces under **Account Login**. Be prepared to enter updated information (and pictures) about your business.

MarketMaker Training Workshops

This training workshop is available upon request by a group of 6-12 producers, extension agents, state regulatory agencies staff, and teachers. Each workshop will best fit the needs of the participants. Email Dr. Ben Posadas for details at ben.posadas@msstate.edu.

How do you search for local food businesses in Mississippi MarketMaker?

Click **Search** and type a keyword in the space under **Search MarketMaker**.

What is the Market Research tool of MarketMaker?

The MarketMaker research tool is an interactive mapping resource for identifying target markets, developing customized census profiles, and mapping food related businesses over demographic maps.

Where do you find the Market Research tool in MarketMaker?

Look for the **Market Research** section in MarketMaker and click **Research your market now** or **Use the previous version**.