2021 Commercial Fishing and Seafood Processing Facts

Dutch Harbor ranked the #1 fishing port in the U.S. by weight and the #3 port by value, with landings of 745 million pounds of seafood worth $249.0 million in 2021.

JOBS - FISHING
Permit holders, crew and vessels:
Commercial fishing permit holders: 13
Total permits owned: 21
Permit holders who fished: 9
Commercial crewmember license holders: 20
Permit holders who fished plus crew: 29
Percentage of local population who fished: 1%1,2,4
Vessels home ported: 183
Owned: 113
Each of these individual small and family businesses represents investment, employment, and income in Unalaska.

INCOME
Estimated ex-vessel income by Unalaska–based fishermen: $12.5 million

Earnings generated from commercial fishing circulated in the local economy through purchases, fuel, vehicles, maintenance, transportation, travel, and other services. Virtually every business in the Unalaska community benefits from commercial fishing dollars.

JOBS – PROCESSING
Seafood processing jobs in the Aleutians West Census Area: 3,086
Total processing wages: $84.0 million
Alaska resident processing wages: $30.4 million
Number of processing facilities (2022): 6

Footnotes - Sources:
1. Commercial fishing permit activity and estimated harvest and earnings by permit holder are from the Alaska Commercial Fishery Entry Commission (CFEC) at https://www.cfec.state.ak.us/fishery_statistics/earnings.htm
2. Crew numbers are from Alaska Department of Fish and Game commercial crew license list, and are the number of full year adult resident license holders who list their address in a given community.
3. Vessel numbers are from CFEC database data found online at https://www.cfec.state.ak.us/plook/#downloads and are a count of commercial fishing licensed vessels that list home port or ownership in a given community.
4. Population data used to calculate the percentage of residents who fished, are from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development Database: Alaska Population Estimates.
5. Processor employment and wage data is from the Alaska Department of Labor provided on request.
6. NOAA, NMFS Office of Science and Technology, see reports “Total Commercial Fishery Landings at Major U.S. Ports” ranked by value and by weight at Top US Ports (noaa.gov).
8. Local taxes from DCCC are from Table 2 of the Alaska Taxable database, found here: Alaska Taxable 2021.pdf

AND MORE JOBS
In addition to direct harvester and processor workers, fisheries related jobs include fuel, accountants, consultants, air and water travel, hardware and marine repair and supply businesses, advocacy and marketing organizations, air cargo crew, freight agents, and scientists.

Much of the seafood harvested in Unalaska was shipped or flown out, providing many transportation sector jobs.

Government related jobs include Alaska Department of Fish and Game • Fish and Wildlife Protection/Alaska Department of Public Safety • Docks and Harbors • Hatcheries • Alaska State Troopers • United States Coast Guard • University of Alaska School of Fisheries • Alaska Sea Grant Marine Advisory program, and more.

REVENUE to the State and Community through Fishery Taxes …
FY 2021 shared taxes – Unalaska received $8.3 million in fisheries business and landing taxes through the municipal tax-sharing program from Unalaska fisheries landings and businesses. The State of Alaska received a like amount. In addition, local fisheries taxes added $5.0 million in revenue to the City of Unalaska.

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
Unalaska is in House District 37, Senate District S.