

King Mackerel Tournament Landings
 South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
 June 2023

At their December 2022 meeting the Council requested NMFS provide information on king and mackerel tournament landings over the last ten years and how those landings were accounted for against the annual catch limit. The Committee discussed each state’s process for permitting king and Spanish mackerel tournaments and tracking tournament fish that may be donated to a state or federal dealer who then donates the monetary value from the sale to a charitable organization.

The SEFSC worked with state agencies to provide tournament landings over the last ten years, specifically South Atlantic tournament landings in the commercial data streams (trip tickets through ACCSP).

- Compiled by SEFSC Fisheries Statistics Division
- Contact: Alan Lowther (alan.lowther@noaa.gov)
- Data for North Carolina, Georgia, and Florida provided by state fisheries management agencies.
- Data for South Carolina was not provided as this (tournament landings on trip tickets) does not occur in South Carolina.

For more information on regulations related to tournaments and tournament sale of king and Spanish mackerel, refer to the NMFS Fishery Bulletin linked here:
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/bulletin/information-king-and-spanish-mackerel-harvested-state-permitted-tournaments-south>

Table 1. North Carolina king mackerel tournament landings, 1999-2022.

Year	King Mackerel Tournaments	All Tournaments w/landings	Pounds	Dealers	Estimated avg. weight	Estimated number
1999	11	15	21,954	6	8.2	2688
2000	17	20	55,765	9	8.3	6756
2001	16	23	38,168	8	9.3	4093
2002	22	30	42,238	12	10.5	4006
2003	24	33	36,056	12	7.3	4939
2004	28	36	41,368	13	8.8	4678
2005	22	31	39,268	13	7.3	5378
2006	24	29	29,730	11	10.2	2927
2007	24	30	40,477	10	7.2	5608
2008	17	22	28,392	9	6.5	4401
2009	11	15	23,304	8	7.8	2997
2010	11	14	18,203	9	12.1	1509
2011	12	17	7,330	10	10.3	714
2012	13	16	20,783	10	10.6	1967

Year	King Mackerel Tournaments	All Tournaments w/landings	Pounds	Dealers	Estimated avg. weight	Estimated number
2013	10	15	20,152	8	12.6	1605
2014	13	16	24,704	9	10.1	2453
2015	15	18	30,965	8	10.7	2881
2016	13	17	28,981	9	11.4	2553
2017	21	25	35,482	9	8.3	4296
2018	17	21	37,581	6	8.7	4315
2019	21	23	45,994	6	8.9	5162
2020	19	20	46,687	7	10.1	4636
2021	20	21	52,904	8	8.1	6526
2022	20	21	37,897	5	9.2	4114

Data notes: Data provided by the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries. NC does not collect landings from every tournament. They collect landings from tournaments that sell their catch to a dealer. Tournaments who sell the catch are required to obtain a special license allowing them to sell that catch. The dealers that the tournaments sell to are then required to report those landings on trip tickets, with the tournament license number recorded on the trip ticket. There may be more king mackerel tournaments occurring that do not sell their catch, in which case, those landings would not be reported here. NC does not report numbers of fish.

The values in the King Mackerel Tournaments Count column are a count of the distinct number of tournament license numbers with king mackerel landings on trip tickets for each year. The All Tournaments W/Landings column shows the number of distinct tournament license numbers with trip ticket landings.

These data begin in fall of 1999, the numbers for 1999 may not be complete (but most tournaments do occur in the fall). Estimated numbers are based on SEFSC calculations using estimated average weights calculated from TIP length sampling and the most recent King mackerel SEDAR length-weight equation.

Table 2. Georgia king mackerel tournament landings, 2014-2022.

Year	Number of tournaments	Pounds	Estimated avg. weight	Estimated number
2014	2	668	10.1	66
2015	5	903	8.8	102
2016	4	717	9.2	78
2017	5	980	8.1	122
2018	4	3800	8.2	463
2019	5		8.6	0
2020	5	1247	9.2	135
2021	5	1580	8.7	183
2022	5		8.7	0

Data notes: Data provided by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Coastal Resources Division. These data reflect what is in the ACCSP Data Warehouse including missing values for 2007 and 2022 Georgia reports there has been some confusion with tournament mackerel and reporting.

In Georgia, the proceeds from selling the tournament mackerel fish have to be donated to a charitable cause. The dealer acts as the sales agent and does not take a cut (does not have a business interest).

Estimated numbers are based on SEFSC calculations using estimated average weights calculated from TIP length sampling for the Atlantic coast from North Carolina to Florida (since there are very few Georgia records in the database) and the most recent King mackerel SEDAR length-weight equation.

Table 3. Florida king mackerel tournament landings, 2001-2022.

Year	King Mackerel Tournaments	Pounds	Dealers	Estimated avg. weight (lbs)	Estimated number
2001	1	CONF	1	8.8	N/A
2002	3	CONF	1	8.8	N/A
2003	0	0	0	8.9	0
2004	0	0	0	9.7	0
2005	0	0	0	8.8	0
2006	0	0	0	9.6	0
2007	0	0	0	9.2	0
2008	0	0	0	9.5	0
2009	0	0	0	9.0	0
2010	1	CONF	1	8.7	N/A
2011	0	0	0	9.9	0
2012	0	0	0	10.9	0
2013	0	0	0	12.3	0
2014	0	0	0	10.2	0
2015	1	CONF	1	8.4	N/A
2016	3	CONF	1	8.5	N/A
2017	0	0	0	7.9	N/A
2018	1	CONF	1	7.9	0
2019	2	CONF	2	8.3	N/A
2020	5	22,738	3	8.7	2620
2021	5	13,981	3	9.1	1544
2022	7	15,648	5	8.6	1817

Data notes: Data provided by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute. If fish are caught in a tournament and the dealer wishes to sell the catch and donate the profits to charity, they must obtain a mackerel tournament donation permit (<https://myfwc.com/license/saltwater/mackerel/>).

One of the requirements is that there must be an associated trip ticket. These landings can be identified by trip ticket numbers beginning with "TN".

The values in the King Mackerel Tournaments Count column are a count of the distinct number of tournament trip tickets with king mackerel landings for each year. Florida was not asked to provide information to populate the All Tournaments W/Landings column.

Florida began using the "TN" code for trip tickets generated from tournaments beginning in 2001. Estimated numbers are based on SEFSC calculations using estimated average weights calculated from TIP length sampling and the most recent King mackerel SEDAR length-weight equation."