

## REVIEW OF THE PELAGIC WET-FISHERIES FOR THE 1967-68 SEASON

The 1967-68 season produced one of the smallest wet-fish catches on record. A moratorium on the taking of sardines forced the already low sardine landings even lower. The anchovy fishery, expected to take up the slack in landings as it has in the past two seasons, failed to develop in southern California, and landings in central California remained below the previous year. Pacific mackerel landings were the lowest since Department of Fish and Game records began in 1925. Jack mackerel landings were the lowest in ten years.

Landings for the calendar year, 1967, reveal a slight increase over the previous two years, but the anchovy catch for reduction, made late in the 1966-67 season, accounts for the increase. If the present rate of landing continues, 1968 will be a record low year for wet-fish landings (Table 1).

Vessels continued to leave the wet-fish fleet, and by June of 1968 it consisted of 21 large purse seiners (60 ft. and over), 12 small purse seiners, and 20 lampara boats, a loss of 4 large and 1 small purse seiners since the 1966-67 season. One large and two small purse-seiners fished in central California, and 15 lampara boats fished Monterey Bay. The remainder of the fleet fished southern California waters.

### Sardine

A moratorium on the take of sardines in California, effective June 7, 1967, limited the catch to mixed loads with no more than 15% sardines. A total of 41 tons were sold to the fresh-fish markets and brought up to \$500 per ton primarily for use as dead bait. Cannery processed 30 tons.

In Baja California the sardine catch was up from last season, at 27,657 tons with most of the catch made in southern Baja California waters (Table 2).

TABLE 1  
LANDINGS OF PELAGIC WET-FISHES  
IN CALIFORNIA IN TONS, 1967-1968

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-----	969	2,866	3,525	33,333	258	9,310	50,288
1966-----	443	31,140	2,314	20,431	121	9,512	63,961
1967-----	74	34,805	583	19,090	136	9,801	64,489

### Anchovy

The California Fish and Game Commission again authorized a 75,000 ton fishery for reduction beginning September 15, 1967, and ending May 15, 1968. The fishery failed to develop in southern California, with only 852 tons landed in the southern area (south of Pt. Conception). Low world prices for fish meal and oil and the resulting low prices paid to fishermen for their catch (\$14-15 per ton), plus a lack of large fish schools close to port combined to inhibit the fishery.

Fishermen in the northern area (north of Pt. Conception) fared much better, delivering 5,651 tons to reduction plants on Monterey Bay, mostly in October, November, and December. This total, however, failed to equal the 8,021 ton catch of the previous season (Table 3).

Reported live-bait catches were below previous 2-3 years (Table 4). The lack of reports from two large operators, who reported in past years, make this total minimal compared to past reports.<sup>1</sup> As in the past, Los Angeles-Long Beach Harbor accounted for about 80% of the take.

### Mackerel

Jack and Pacific mackerel catches continued to decline. Pacific mackerel landings of 691 tons were the lowest in the recorded history of the fishery. Jack mackerel landings, although higher than ten years ago, were the lowest since that time. Most of the 18,712 tons taken were caught at Tanner and Cortes Banks, as were some of the Pacific mackerel (Table 5.)—*Robson A. Collins, California Department of Fish and Game.*

<sup>1</sup> Live-bait catch records are derived from voluntary reports made to the Department of Fish and Game by each fisherman. Not all fishermen report, so these figures should be regarded as minimal.

TABLE 2  
SARDINE CATCH IN TONS, 1963-64 THROUGH 1967-68  
(Period June Through The Following May)

Season	California	Baja California	Total
1963-64-----	2,942	18,384	21,362
1964-65-----	6,103	27,120	33,223
1965-66-----	962	22,247	23,109
1966-67-----	344	19,529	19,873
1967-68*-----	71	27,036	28,007

\* Preliminary.

TABLE 3  
**ANCHOVY LANDINGS FOR REDUCTION  
 IN THE SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN PERMIT AREAS  
 1965-66 Through 1967-68**

Season	Southern Permit Area	Northern Permit Area	Total
1965-66*	16,468	375	16,843
1966-67†	29,589	8,021	37,610
1967-68‡	852	5,651	6,503
Total	46,909	14,047	60,956

Seasons:

\* October 15, 1965 through April 30, 1966.

† October 1, 1966 through April 30, 1967.

‡ September 15, 1967 through May 15, 1968.

TABLE 4  
**COMMERCIAL LANDINGS AND LIVE BAIT CATCH  
 OF ANCHOVIES IN TONS 1963 THROUGH 1967**

Year	Reduction	Other Commercial	Live Bait	Total
1963	0	2,285	4,442	6,727
1964	0	2,488	5,191	7,679
1965	170	2,866	6,148	9,184
1966	27,335	3,705	6,691	37,731
1967	32,349	2,455	5,387	40,191

TABLE 5  
**JACK AND PACIFIC MACKEREL CATCH IN TONS,  
 1963-64 THROUGH 1965-66  
 (Period May Through April)**

Season	Jack Mackerel	Pacific Mackerel
1963-64	42,038	17,105
1964-65	39,557	12,437
1965-66	33,831	3,794
1966-67	22,889	2,037
1967-68	18,712	691

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