



# Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

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## NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE ANNOUNCES THE PUBLICATION OF A NEW FINAL RULE TO IMPLEMENT MINIMUM CONSERVATION STANDARDS FOR SPINY LOBSTER (*Panulirus argus*) IMPORTS

NOAA Fisheries Service published a final rule implementing Amendment 4 to the Spiny Lobster Fishery Management Plan (FMP) of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and Amendment 8 to the Joint Spiny Lobster FMP of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic (Amendment 4/8). The final rule was published in the *Federal Register* on January 12, 2009, (74 FR 1148) and becomes effective on February 11, 2009.

The final rule will prohibit any person from importing spiny lobster:

- less than 5 ounces tail weight (5 ounces is defined as a tail that weighs 4.2 – 5.4 ounces) or compliance may be demonstrated by meeting the greater than 3 inch carapace length or 5.5 inch tail length; or
- if imported into Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Islands, less than 6.0 ounces tail weight (6 ounces is defined as a tail that weighs 5.9 – 6.4 ounces) or compliance may be demonstrated by meeting the 3.5 inch carapace length or 6.2 inch tail length.

Additionally, the importation of lobster tail meat without the exoskeleton attached, or of berried or stripped lobsters, will be prohibited. The Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic

Fishery Management Councils, in cooperation with NOAA Fisheries Service, developed Amendment 4/8.

### How Can We Improve These Fishery Bulletins?

If you have any suggestions on how we may improve future fishery bulletins, please contact: Kim Amendola, Communication Specialist  
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This bulletin provides only a summary of the information regarding the existing regulations. Any discrepancies between this bulletin and the regulations as published in the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*. For a copy of the *Federal Register* notice contact Jason Rueter; [Jason.Rueter@noaa.gov](mailto:Jason.Rueter@noaa.gov); telephone 727-824-5350.

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