



FACTS offers a number of special harvest flexibilities to its users. Real time reporting leads to more accurate harvest data and increased accountability. The increase in reporting accuracy and accountability makes it possible to offer these flexibilities to harvesters who use the program.

### All FACTS Users

How does enforcement identify that I am eligible for the FACTS Program flexibilities?

FACTS users display the identifying letters “EHR” (Electronic Harvest Reporting) on their vessel, with individual letters added for each fishery they are reporting in FACTS. (Example: “EHRCF” is someone using FACTS for Crabbing and Finfishing). This allows the Natural Resources Police to easily identify program participants, especially those using the special harvest flexibilities, such as the early start time option.

### Blue Crab - Flexible Day Off

What does this flexibility allow?

Instead of being restricted to their declared Sunday or Monday off, crab harvesters in FACTS can change their day off from week to week as they choose.

How do I use this flexibility?

Users and their vessel must take at least one day off from crabbing each week. There is no need to declare your day off in FACTS, or to notify anyone. Just take a day off from crabbing once a week. Keep in mind that for FACTS users the work week starts on Wednesday and ends on Tuesday.

Who can use this flexibility?

Any commercial blue crab license holder who uses FACTS for their harvest reporting.

Can I use this flexibility if I am harvesting with another harvester who is not in FACTS?

No. In order to use the flexible day off, all license holders on the vessel (each reporting their own individual harvest) must be FACTS users. Each of those license holders would submit their own harvest information in FACTS.

### Blue Crab - Early Start Time for Crab Pots

What does this flexibility allow?

To start harvesting from *crab pots* in the Chesapeake Bay up to 2 hours before sunrise. If you start early you must end early. This does not allow for an extension of your work hours.

How do I use this flexibility?

When you send your Start Hail you mark a check box indicating that you are planning on using the Early Start Time for that trip.

Who can use this flexibility?

Crab pot harvesters who are signed up to use our daily electronic reporting system (FACTS) when they are crab potting in the Chesapeake Bay.

Can I use this flexibility if I am harvesting with another harvester who is not in FACTS?

No. In order to use the Early Start Time harvest flexibility, all license holders on the vessel (each reporting their own individual harvest) must be FACTS users. Each of those license holders would submit their own harvest information in FACTS.

Why is this flexibility only available to crab pot users?

Both the Blue Crab Advisory Committee and the Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission felt as though an optional start time would increase the user conflict for other gear types, specifically for trotline users who must set their gear daily.



### Shellfish - Early Start Time

What does this flexibility allow?

To start harvesting up to ½ hour before sunrise. If you start early you must end early. This does not allow for an extension of your work hours.

How do I use this flexibility?

At the beginning of each work day you will indicate in FACTS that you plan to start early.

Can I use this flexibility if I am harvesting with another harvester who is not in FACTS?

No. According to [COMAR 08.02.04.03D](#) persons may not be in possession of oysters on a vessel any time before sunrise. The FACTS flexibility only covers FACTS users, so any other harvester would be in violation of this regulation, unless they were acting only as a crew member for the FACTS user, and not harvesting under their own license.

### Shellfish - Authorized Representative

What does this flexibility allow?

Program participants can designate authorized representatives to take their harvest to dealers under their license.

Does my Authorized Representative also have to be in FACTS?

Yes, authorized representatives must be FACTS Shellfish Harvester program participants and have a commercial shellfish license in Maryland.

### Shellfish - Skipjack with Auxiliary Yawl

What does this flexibility allow?

Shellfish harvesters in FACTS do not need to call NRP to notify them when they plan to harvest using a Skipjack with Auxiliary Yawl. When starting an oyster trip, simply check the box in FACTS at the start of your trip for the day. This fulfills the requirement of notifying enforcement that you are using that kind of method of harvesting for the day.

### For-Hire Fishing Guide (Charter) - Striped Bass

What does this flexibility allow?

The captain and one mate, if present, may each keep one striped bass per day, within the open recreational striped bass season after May 15th.

Are captains from other states with reciprocity agreements able to use the flexibility?

No, due to state regulations this flexibility is only available to captains with a Maryland guide license.

### Finfish - Striped Bass

Will I still need my ITQ Quota share card to track my harvest?

No, FACTS check-in reporting replaces the Quota Share Card. The system updates your striped bass quota in real-time, displaying your available quota when you log in. From your computer or tablet, customized business tools in your FACTS account make it easy to see your quota activity (harvest and transfers).

### Finfish - Striped Bass - Transfers

What does this flexibility allow?

FACTS users can transfer their striped bass quota to each other through their FACTS accounts. Eliminating the need to get documents together, notarized, and provided to DNR staff for processing.



### **Finfish - Striped Bass - Next Day Check-in**

What does this flexibility allow?

You can take your striped bass harvest to the check station to be checked in the day after your harvest.

Can I check-in two days of harvest at the same time?

Yes, you can use this flexibility to check in two sequential days of striped bass harvest at the same time.

How do I use this flexibility?

At the end of your trip there will be a check box asking if you wish to use the Next Day Check-in for that trip's harvest. Check the box if you plan on using this flexibility.

If you take a second trip before going to the check station (harvesting two days in a row), the check station will enter the total count and weight (lbs.) from both trips for the check in.

### **Finfish - Striped Bass - Authorized Representative**

What does this flexibility allow?

FACTS users can designate an Authorized Representative to take their striped bass to a check station on their behalf. This Authorized Representative does not need to be a FACTS user or a commercial license holder. (Example: This flexibility is popular with harvesters who fish together on the same boat. One of them is designated as the authorized user for the others and takes all of the catch to the check station. As each license holder's fish are checked-in, FACTS sends them a text message receipt that includes their remaining available quota amount.)

Can Authorized Representatives use the Next Day Check-in flexibility on my behalf?

No, if an authorized representative is taking in a FACTS user's striped bass to a check station it must be done the day of harvest.

How do I use this flexibility?

You can designate Authorized Representatives in the "My Account" section of your FACTS account. This creates a linked account they can use to check in your harvest. They will sign in at the Check Station using this account to check in your harvest. You will receive a notification via text (if you have Opted In to receive texts from FACTS) letting you know that your fish have been checked in.

### **Finfish - Yellow Perch**

Do I still need to call in to the hotline daily to report my harvest?

No, since FACTS is a real time reporting system it replaces the need for you to call in your harvest. You can easily see the currently available quota for all three of the quota areas in your FACTS account.

Will I still need my Yellow Perch Harvest Permit card?

No, FACTS will track your yellow perch quota for you, so you no longer need the permit card.

Do I still need to tag my yellow perch?

Yes, but FACTS users can choose to use free box tags instead of paying for individual tags.

### **Finfish - Menhaden**

Do I still need to fill out the online Menhaden Harvest Reporting Form on the DNR website?

No, reporting in FACTS replaces the need to fill out the online form with your menhaden harvest information.