

GREEN CRAB REGULATIONS IN NEW ENGLAND: AT-A-GLANCE*



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Invasive species are regulated differently under federal and state laws. Permits may be required to sell, transport, or possess them, and rules can vary by state. What is allowed in one state may be prohibited in another. This is an ‘at-a-glance’ overview of existing green crab regulations in New England.



	CT	ME	MA	NH	NY	RI
LISTED/REGULATED AS AN INVASIVE SPECIES 	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES Illegal to introduce to environment; Legal to possess, sell, buy, propagate, and transport.	NO
GREEN CRAB-SPECIFIC COMMERCIAL FISHING LICENSE REQUIREMENT 	NO	YES A commercial green crab license and green crab only wholesale dealer license required.	NO Green crabs excluded from definition of "edible crab, commercial fishing permit is not required.	NO	NO	YES A commercial green crab license is required.
STANDARD COMMERCIAL FISHING LICENSE REQUIREMENT 	YES Green crab can be harvested with a commercial license	NO	NO	NO	YES Green crab can be harvested for commercial purposes with a permit.	YES Green crab can be harvested under a standard license with a limited crustacean endorsement
RECREATIONAL HARVEST PROVISIONS 	NO	NO	YES Green crab can be harvested for recreational purposes without a permit but with agency notice..	NO	NO Green crab can be harvested for recreational purposes without a permit.	NO
BAIT DEALER LICENSE/PERMIT REQUIREMENT 	YES Bait dealers' license required to sell as bait.	YES Bait dealers' permit required to sell as bait.	YES Bait dealers' permit required to sell as bait.	YES Bait dealers' license required to sell as bait.	YES Marine bait permit required to sell as bait. Green crab may not be introduced in 'free-living' state.	YES Commercial marine dealers' license required to sell as bait.
LISTED UNDER THE FEDERAL LACEY ACT	NO At the federal level, invasive species are mainly regulated under the Lacey Act. Species listed as "injurious" cannot be imported into the U.S. or transported across state and territorial lines without a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Congress or the Secretary of the Interior decides which species are listed. However, Green crabs ARE NOT LISTED under the Lacey Act and thus not under federal regulation.					
INTERSTATE TRANSPORT REGULATION	There are no federal rules restricting the interstate transport or sale of green crabs. Instead, the rules depend on the laws of the states involved. Anyone selling green crabs across state lines must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow commercial fishing rules in the state where the crabs are harvested Comply with laws about possessing live crabs in both states Follow sales rules in the state where the crabs are sold Regulations may differ depending on whether the crabs are sold for food or bait. Check with the appropriate state agencies before selling.					

* Regulatory Status of European Green Crab (NSGLC-25-05-01)- Advisory memo prepared by the National Sea Grant Law Center in partnerships with New Hampshire Sea Grant. The full memo is available online : <https://nsglc.olemiss.edu/Advisory/pdfs/advisory-green-crab-1-28-25.pdf>