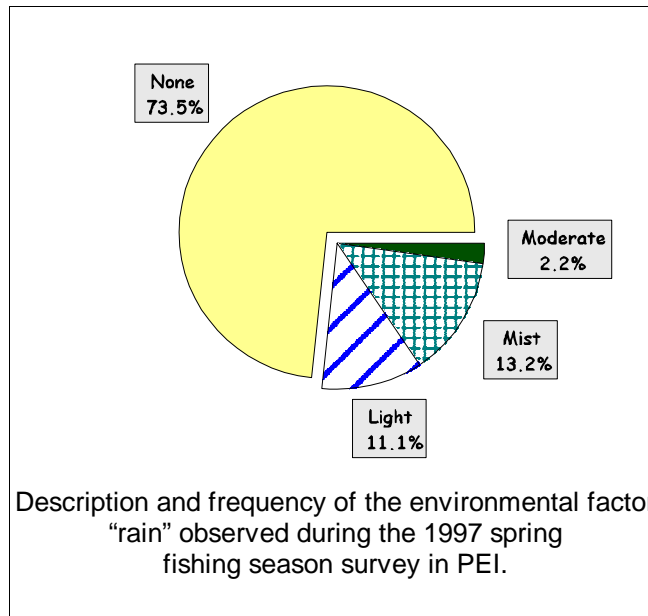


Exposure to Rain

In a study conducted from May to July 1997 in Prince Edward Island, a list of fishing and handling practices which may significantly impact lobster health before, after holding, or prior to processing and marketing was established. These practices and environmental conditions were monitored on 53 lobster boats from 11 different fishing ports, while a total of 1,672 lobsters were examined.



Lobsters are sensitive to fresh water exposure^{1, 2 & 3} and heavy exposure to Rain is detrimental to lobsters, especially during prolonged exposure times. Fishers and buyers are strongly encouraged to protect lobsters from adverse weather conditions, and particular attention should be given to rain exposure.

Live lobsters that have been significantly exposed to freshwater water for a considerable period, will appear weak and will have a much slower response to external stimulation such as packing over, grading, packaging, or other types of handling.

¹ Jury et al. 1994. The behaviour of lobsters in response to reduced salinity. J. Exp. Mar. Biol. Ecol. 180: 23-37.

² Ennis GP. 1995. Larval and postlarval ecology.

In: Factor, J.R., Ed. Biology of the Lobster *Homarus americanus*. San Diego: Academic Press, 23-46.

³ McMahon BR. 1995. Physiology: An integrative approach. In: Factor, J.R., Ed. Biology of the Lobster *Homarus americanus*. San Diego: Academic Press, 497-517.

In this 1997 study, we observed that **lobsters landed on Rainy days were 6.3 times more likely to be weak upon arrival at processing plants than were lobsters landed on days without rain.**

O Lobster directly exposed to freshwater (i.e., Rain) experience vigour loss (8 weakness).
O Protection from these weather conditions would substantially reduce productivity losses.



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