

## Demand and Price Are Falling for Lobster

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For many, summer in New England would not be complete without throwing on a bib and cracking open a freshly boiled lobster. This year, however, fewer people are ordering the region's signature dish, driving down lobster prices and making times harder for lobster fishermen already reeling from the high cost of fuel and bait.

'Lobster is a luxury item, and when things are tight, people don't buy lobster,' said Peter Eaton, a lobsterman from Kennebunkport, Me., who is getting about \$3.75 per lobster off the boat, a quarter less than three months ago and about a dollar less than last summer.

While price and demand have hit their lowest point in years, lobster fishermen are hauling in larger catches than ever. Restaurants in New England have been running lobster specials all summer, trying to pass on the lower prices and move lobsters from the tank to the table.

'We can be creative with lobsters, given the fact that demand across the country is off on them a bit,' said Roger Berkowitz, the president and chief executive of Legal Sea Foods, a restaurant chain based in Boston. Its restaurants have been running lobster specials this summer, and a lobster is about \$4 cheaper this summer than last.

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