

# '87 crab harvest jumps 33 percent

As of last summer, crab fishermen throughout Alaska netted 23 million pounds of King crab, a 33 percent increase from the 1986 harvest of 17.3 million pounds, according to the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute.

This increase, as well as the anticipated catch for the 1987 harvest that began Sept. 1, signals a continuing stabilization of King crab supply.

Although crab is harvested from icy waters throughout Alaska, the largest percentage comes from the Western region — Bristol Bay and the Bering Sea. About 11.5 million pounds of this year's crab harvest — or nearly 50 percent — was taken from the Bristol Bay area.

"The new numbers show that the western region of Bristol Bay and the Bering Sea is recovering," said John Martin, chairman of ASMI's shellfish marketing committee. "We believe that the King crab resources will continue to improve throughout the next five years and are recovering from the decline of the early 1980s. The numbers are getting better every year."

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