



Gulf Commercial Fisherman Program

Sample Agenda and Curriculum

Gulf Reef Fish Focus

DAY 1	
Time	Topic
8:00 am	Introductions/Ice Breakers
9:00 am	Fisheries Introduction/Overview 1. History of the reef fish fishery 2. Why is the fishery managed the way it is? 3. What is the lived experience of people currently in the fishery? 4. Where do current industry members see the future of the fishery?
10:30 am	Break
10:45 am	Introduction to fishery management 1. Who manages the fishery? 2. How does a fisherman get involved in the management process?
12:00 pm	Lunch
1:30 pm	Vessel Tour 1. What are the different types of vessels that fish for reef fish? 2. What are the main gear types? 3. Dock visit/dock walk
4:30	Sustainability in Commercial Fishery 1. What does sustainability mean? 2. How is sustainability integrated into practices on a fishing vessel? 3. Introduction to handling practices
5:00 pm	Wrap Up/Debrief
6:00 pm	Dinner

DAY 2, May 6, 2025	
Time	Topic
8:00 am	Recap the previous Day
8:30 am	Fishing Gear 1. More details on prominent fishing gears. 2. What is the difference between vertical line and longline? 3. How do these gear function? 4. What are the main areas these gears fish? 5. How to tie on hooks. 6. How to bait gear. 7. Gear maintenance 8. Gear safety.
12:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm	Vessel hierarchy and etiquette 1. What are your responsibilities as a deckhand? 2. How do captains and deckhands interact with each other? 3. What are basic rules on a boat? 4. How do deckhands interact with the fish house or customers when offloading? 5. What should you pack?
3:00 pm	Break
3:15 pm	Introduction to a Fish House 1. What is the Fish House role? 2. How the Fish House evaluates fish 3. Fish quality and handling
5:00 pm	Wrap Up/Debrief
6:00 pm	Dinner

DAY 3	
Time	Topic
8:00 am	Recap the previous Day
9:00 am	Key Species 1. What are the main fish species you will see? 2. What are the fish species that are in highest demand? 3. What areas are these fish found on? 4. How do captains decide what areas to fish?
10:30 am	Break

DAY 3	
Time	Topic
10:45 am	Protected Species 1. What species are not allowed to be kept. 2. What are some of the threatened and endangered species you will interact with? 3. What do you do when an interaction with a threatened or endangered species is unavoidable?
11:45-1:30	Lunch
1:30 pm	Financial training: 1. How are fishermen paid? 2. What does a payout look like? 3. Ensuring you have enough money in the account until next trip. 4. Financing options as you grow your business.
2:30 pm	Break/Transportation Time
3:15 pm	Fish Handling and Quality 1. What to do with the fish once it's been caught? 2. What does a high-quality fish look like? 3. What is the fish house looking for?
5:00 pm	Wrap Up
6:00 pm	Dinner

DAY 4	
Time	Topic
8:30 am	Recap the previous Day
8:30 am	Safety Training with the Coast Guard
12:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm	Safety Training with the Coast Guard
3:30 pm	Advocacy Group Roundtable
5:00 pm	Wrap Up/Concluding Remarks
6:00 pm	Dinner

DAY 5
Fishing Day