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Red Drum Fisherman J.B. Gaskill, Ocracoke, N.C.  
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Seafood Traditions:

James Barrie Gaskill (JBG) of Ocracoke, NC talks with Pam Morris (PM) about the importance of red drum to his livelihood.

PM: How long have you been a commercial fisherman?

JBG: I've been fishing full time since 1979. Before that I fished part time when in school and working other jobs; fishing in the morning and in the evenings.

PM: What type of species do you fish for?

JBG: In the spring, we'll fish for Spanish mackerel and bluefish, also hard crabs. Right now I'm fishing for flounder with gill nets.

PM: Of the species you land, what percentage is red drum?

JBG: A small percentage of the catch is drum but they are significant to the dollar amount we bring home. For example, if I land the full amount of fish that I am allowed, it could mean an additional \$75.00 – \$200 a day to my check.

PM: How do regulations affect the amount you can catch?

JBG: Right now, we're allowed seven fish incidental to another species as the principal finfish landed. Once the quota of 250,000 lbs has been reached, no more red drum can be landed until the fishing year restarts. There are two time periods where you are allowed to land, one you can catch four fish and the other seven fish.

Contributed by Pam Morris.