



The North Carolina Seafood Festival

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2023 North Carolina Seafood Festival Economic Impact Study

MOREHEAD CITY, NC (March 27, 2024) – The North Carolina Seafood Festival is proud to share the results of a comprehensive economic impact study administered during the 2023 festival, showcasing a substantial contribution to the local economy and a promising outlook for future festivals.

Conducted by Chandlerthinks, the study reveals an impressive estimated economic impact of \$12,737,065, generated from both local and out-of-area visitors. With an estimated attendance of 180,000, the festival not only celebrated North Carolina's rich seafood heritage but also significantly boosted the local economy.

Key Highlights from the 2023 Economic Impact Study:

- Out-of-area visitors contributed over \$6.5 million to the economy, with local attendees adding nearly \$6.2 million.
- The average spending per person was notably higher among overnight visitors, at \$271.06, compared to \$46.01 for day-trippers.
- The festival attracted a diverse audience, with 40% attending for the first time and a 95% likelihood of return among 2023 attendees.
- Spending patterns showed a strong preference for food and shopping, enhancing the vibrancy and economic health of Downtown Morehead City.

"The North Carolina Seafood Festival is not just a celebration of seafood and community but a vital economic engine for our region," said Virginia Yopp, Executive Director of The North Carolina Seafood Festival. "These results underscore the festival's importance in promoting tourism, supporting local businesses, and fostering community spirit."

Looking ahead, the festival aims to build on this success, continuing to draw visitors from near and far, celebrating the region's seafood heritage, and contributing to the economic and cultural vitality of Morehead City and beyond. The full study is available on The North Carolina Seafood Festival's website.

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About The North Carolina Seafood Festival

In its 38th year, The North Carolina Seafood Festival is a non-profit organization of Carteret County citizens and businesspeople, in conjunction with the town of Morehead City, N.C.

Recognizing the importance of seafood to eastern North Carolina, The North Carolina Seafood Festival is organized to develop and conduct a festival every year, the first weekend in October, to: promote the positive social and economic impact of the seafood industry on the citizens of North Carolina; educate the public about seafood and its importance to the state economy; publicize the wide variety of local seafood indigenous to North Carolina and provide the opportunity for people to enjoy it; boost tourism and recreation in eastern North Carolina in the non-summer months; establish a scholarship program for educational pursuits related to the seafood industry; and provide the opportunity for North Carolina non-profit, civic, church and educational organizations to raise funds through participation in the festival.

Festival proceeds are shared with community organizations who donate their efforts to the event. Since 1987, over \$2 million has been dispersed among participating Carteret County non-profit groups.

To learn more about The North Carolina Seafood Festival, Inc. and stay updated on the 2024 festival, scheduled for October 4-6 on the Morehead City Waterfront, visit NCSeafoodFestival.org.

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