

# Lowering Variable Costs: Self-Check for Lobstermen

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Use these targeted questions to reflect on your current operations and identify small improvements that can lower costs and improve efficiency. Consider going over them solo or with your crew during prep days or off-season planning.

## Is there a faster, more efficient way?

- Can any part of your trap-hauling or baiting process be done faster without sacrificing quality?
- Are you taking the most efficient route between traps based on tides and weather?
- Could a new tool, layout, or routine make loading/unloading traps smoother?

## Raise awareness and test new ideas

- When was the last time you tried a new technique or gear setup?
- Have you talked with other lobstermen about what's working well for them?
- What's one experiment you could try next week to save time or money (e.g., bait alternative, hauling schedule change)?

## Watch, ask 'why?', document, and checklist

- What repetitive tasks eat up the most time or energy — and why are they done that way?
- Could you create a checklist for daily or weekly maintenance to avoid costly breakdowns?
- When crew members do things differently, does one method work better than another?

## Set goals, 'recipes', and measure

- How long does a typical haul take, and what would your target time be?
- Do you have a "standard day" playbook for new or seasonal crew to follow?
- Are you tracking catch per trap, fuel usage, or bait cost per pound caught?