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Cod in Divisions 2J+3KL -Estimates of Biomass and Age Composition for the portion of
the Stock in the NAFO Regulatory Area from Canadian Research Vessel Surveys

by

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Introduction

The Fisheries Commission has annually requested information on "the stock separation in Div. 2J+3KL and the cod stock in Div. 3L in the NAFO Regulatory Area and a projection, if possible, of the portion likely to be available in the Regulatory Area in future years". Information is also requested on "the age composition of that portion of the stock in the Regulatory Area". This document updates information presented previously (Murphy and Bishop, 1995) on the proportion of the biomass occurring in the NAFO Regulatory Area (NRA) and the age composition of this biomass using data from the Canadian 1995 research surveys in the area.

Results and Discussion

Stock separation

The issue of stock separation has been addressed in some detail by the Scientific Council in the past (NAFO Scientific Council Reports, 1986) and the general conclusions have been that the stock be managed as a single stock complex (2J3KL). Recent work (Bentzen et al. 1996) has shown that within the northern cod complex, two pooled samples, NORTH (Hamilton, Funk and Belle Isle Banks) and SOUTH (the northern Grand Bank area) are distinguishable using microsatellite DNA techniques. This lends support to tagging work (Lear 1984, and Taggart et al. 1995) which showed that cod tagged in spawning aggregations on offshore banks show fidelity to these banks. Genetic work is continuing with the goals of identifying inshore or bay stocks and other distinct population in the offshore if they exist. The ability of being able to identify distinct elements of the stock complex may have implications on how this stock is managed in the future.

Survey coverage

The area of NAFO Div 3L, in depths to 400 fathoms is 42,265 sq. naut. miles, of which 3,700 or 9% is in the NRA (Table 1, Fig. 1). All areas within this depth zone in both Div. 2J and 3K are on the shoreward side of the Canadian 200-mile fishery zone. The total area in the Div. 2J3KL to 400 fathoms is about 106,000 sq. naut. miles (Table 2.); therefore, the area to this depth in the NRA is about 3.5% of the total.

Stratified-random surveys have been conducted by Canada in Div. 2J, 3K and 3L during the autumn since 1977, 1978 and 1981 respectively. Stratified-random surveys have also been conducted during the spring since 1971 (excluding 1983-84) and during the winter in 1985 and 1986. Surveys during the spring for 1971-1976 period were incomplete

with regards to strata coverage and have been excluded from analysis in this document.

Biomass estimates

Winter surveys are not regularly conducted in Division 3L. Results of winter surveys in 1985 and 1986 indicated that about 25% of the 3L biomass occurred in the NRA (Murphy et al., 1991). No stratified random surveys have been conducted during winter since that time.

Spring surveys conducted during the 1977-90 period show the portion of total 3L biomass in the NRA has ranged from 0.4% to 6.0% with a mean of 2.9%. Since 1991 this percentage increased from 10.8% to a high of 63% in 1994 and was 26.2% in 1995 (Table 3).

Autumn survey results for the years 1981-95 indicated that on average 3.5% of the 3L biomass occurs in the NRA with the 1994 value of 9.7% being the highest observed. The 1995 value was about 1.6% (Table 4).

Surveys conducted during autumn for the years 1981-92 in Div. 2J3KL indicated that only a small portion, less than 1%, of the total 2J3KL biomass occurs in the NRA at that time. In 1993 this portion increased to 5% in the NRA and was < 1% (Table 5).

The average Divisional biomass from the autumn surveys (Table 6) has been variable in recent years. Biomass has declined substantially since 1990 and is currently (1995) at an extremely low level.

Age composition

The age compositions from spring and autumn research vessel surveys in Div. 3L since 1986 (Tables 7-8; Figures 2-5) indicate for most years a higher proportion of younger cod are found in the NRA.

The 1985 and 1986 winter survey results, which indicated the highest seasonal proportion of 3L biomass in the NRA showed that the age compositions were similar in both areas.

REFERENCES

Age compositions for the entire 2J3KL cod research vessel survey biomass (Table 9) were similar to those which occur in Div. 3L inside the 200 mile fishing zone.

Bentzen P., C.T. Taggart, D.E. Ruzzante and D. Cook. 1996. Microsatellite Polymorphism and Population Structure of Atlantic Cod (*Gadus morhua*) in the Northwest Atlantic. NAFO SCR Doc. 96/21. Ser.No. N2694. 20 p.

Lear, W.H. 1984 Discrimination of the stock complex of Atlantic cod (*Gadus morhua*) of southern Labrador and eastern Newfoundland, as inferred from tagging studies. J. Northw. Atl. Fish Sci. 5:143-159.

Murphy, E.F., C.A. Bishop, and J.W.Baird. 1991. Cod in Divisions 2J+3KL Estimates of biomass and age composition for the portion of the stock beyond the Canadian 200 mile fishery zone. NAFO SCR Doc. 91/51. Ser.No. N1934. 12 p.

Murphy, E.F and C.A.Bishop. Cod in Divisions 2J+3KL -Estimates of biomass and age composition for the portion of the stock in the NAFO Regulatory Area. NAFO SCR Doc. 95/46. Ser.No. N2557 8 p.

Table 1. Proportion of area (square nautical miles) outside the 200 mile fishery zone in NAFO Div. 3L by depth range.

Depth fathoms	Depth meters	Area total	Area outside	% outside
31-50	56-91	8,552	0	0
51-100	92-183	17,452	933	5
101-150	184-274	6,918	791	11
151-200	275-366	3,855	768	20
201-300	367-549	1,142	636	56
301-400	550-732	804	554	69
unstratified shoreward		3,542	0	0
total		42,265	3,682	9

Table 2. Area in square nautical miles in Div 2J, 3K and 3L.

Division	Survey area (mi . sq.) (0-750 m)	%
2J	27,633	26
3K	36,545	34
3L	42,262	40
Total	106,443	100

Table 3. Estimates of cod biomass outside the 200 mile fishery zone in Division 3L by strata and depth zone from Canadian RV surveys conducted in the spring over the period 1977-95. The number of successful set are in parenthesis.

Strata	% Area	ATC	ATC	ATC	ATC	ATC	ATC	ATC	WT	WT	WT	WT	WT	WT	WT	WT	WT	WT
385 51-100	5	21	56	314	21	53	107	154	40	325	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
390 "	55	278	1169	1539	275	144	223	277	144	109	35	202	20	16	0	0	0	0
389 101-150	62	833	659	681	4292	296	1031	3825	558	401	429	382	318	140	39	0	0	6
391 "	100	634	356	1048	2064	1212	95	429	826	201	41	95	621	283	0	0	0	0
387 151-200	37	45	68	170	90	72	192	927	10557	3422	3005	241	0	0	20	0	0	0
388 "	99	1169	179	346	188	1308	343	1556	1162	995	239	481	0	0	9	0	0	9
392 "	100	30	66	189	0	128	256	2237	435	3	98	57	0	0	179	10	5	0
729 201-300	100	392	1169	1539	275	144	223	277	144	109	35	202	20	16	0	0	0	0
731 "	100	732	1169	1539	275	144	223	277	144	109	35	202	20	16	0	0	0	0
733 "	50	158	619	814	296	1031	3825	558	401	429	382	318	140	39	0	0	0	0
730 301-400	100	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed
732 "	100	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed
734 "	67	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
biomass outside 200 mi. limit		3010	1769	3659	8411	2210	3680	15263	6044	1017	1044	1845	12733	7849	4505	901	2162	90
total 3L biomass		70815	78212	129117	139030	220979	140578	267516	239857	257564	259080	192713	228865	72416	27919	2248	3429	343
% outside		4.3%	2.3%	2.8%	6.0%	1.0%	2.6%	5.7%	2.5%	0.4%	0.4%	1.0%	5.6%	10.8%	16.1%	40.1%	63.1%	26.2%

Table 4. Estimates of cod biomass outside the 200 mile fishery zone in Division 3L by strata and depth zone from Canadian RV surveys conducted in the autumn over the period 1981-95. The number of successful set are in parenthesis.

Strata	% Area	ATC	ATC	ATC	WT	WT	WT	AN	WT	WT	WT	WT	WT	WT	WT	WT	WT	WT
385 51-100	5	2	2	94	51	94	5	55	48	16	3	36	6	14	0	0	0	0
390 "	55	5	32	469	79	16-18	37-39	72	65	78	87	101	114-115	129-130	145-146	160-162	176-181	
389 101-150	62	2125	1697	1697	(125)	(208)	(231)	(142)	(165)	(189)	(174)	(161)	(219)	(215)	(153)	(200)	(166)	
391 "	100	487	159	79	325	370	70	6	23	165	15	10	10	10	0	0	0	
387 151-200	37	494	3410	2762	1501	7483	1014	477	176	3198	641	303	267	34	9	0	0	
388 "	99	456	610	1892	114	362	1348	1056	255	124	90	43	34	34	0	0	0	
392 "	100	220	109	68	106	11	8	41	22	120	30	2	6.0	0	15	0	0	
729 201-300	100	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	
731 "	100	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	
733 "	50	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	
730 301-400	100	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	
732 "	100	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	not surveyed	
734 "	67	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
biomass outside 200 mi. limit		501	6732	788	6523	5693	9006	2480	1450	2877	6068	1542	584	651	119	85		
total 3L biomass		109819	87997	131267	191702	165169	190732	151936	139726	73514	210725	52750	50506	10808	608	1232	5275	
% outside		0.5%	7.7%	0.6%	3.4%	3.4%	4.7%	1.6%	1.0%	3.9%	2.9%	2.9%	1.2%	6.0%	9.7%	1.6%		

Table 8. Percent age compositions Divisions 31, inside and outside the 200 mile limit as derived from the 1986-95 autumn RV surveys.

Age	1986		1987		1988		1989		1990		1991		1992		1993		1994		1995	
	AN 72	WT 65	WT 78	WT 87	WT 101	WT 114-115	WT 129-130	WT 145-146	WT 160-162	WT 176-181										
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	3	4	5	3	4	5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	6	6	16	24	18	10	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
4	27	13	8	23	31	29	26	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29
5	23	31	18	11	11	30	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
6	24	28	22	14	4	17	10	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
7	7	11	16	14	3	3	2	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
8	8	4	1	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	2	3	6	3	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 9. MEAN NUMBERS OF COD PER TOW AT AGE FROM AUTUMN RV SURVEYS IN DIVISIONS 2J3KL.

Age	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
1	0.02	0.41	0.27	0.16	0.51	1.04	0.36	0.02	0.14	0.21	0.59	0.66	0.40	0.03	0.01	0.00	0.01	1.58
2	0.40	0.32	3.00	1.59	2.49	6.09	5.57	1.10	1.85	1.56	2.14	8.25	1.91	1.34	0.29	0.37	0.05	0.97
3	5.39	1.94	2.48	5.11	5.88	12.31	10.79	7.27	4.77	2.04	3.93	8.98	10.93	3.35	1.78	0.60	0.16	0.74
4	11.51	11.78	3.83	2.74	5.93	10.65	15.23	12.35	20.70	4.03	3.20	8.30	12.95	13.97	2.30	0.83	0.13	0.30
5	13.95	16.79	13.23	3.26	3.83	10.88	11.34	10.01	31.29	13.23	5.29	6.20	8.61	9.00	2.72	0.34	0.08	0.12
6	5.51	10.53	13.31	9.67	2.79	3.88	9.59	7.28	21.29	11.61	10.57	6.52	5.64	3.31	1.42	0.22	0.02	0.06
7	1.62	2.27	4.99	8.78	5.82	2.44	2.30	4.24	10.14	4.38	10.13	8.23	3.90	1.10	0.35	0.04	0.02	0.01
8	0.63	0.92	1.19	3.66	5.31	5.35	1.37	0.92	5.26	2.67	2.58	4.84	3.98	0.50	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.00
9	0.47	0.31	0.37	0.74	2.59	2.94	2.09	0.78	1.37	1.38	1.55	1.62	1.68	0.35	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00
10	0.33	0.26	0.23	0.23	0.57	1.42	1.30	0.67	0.58	0.34	0.79	0.98	0.55	0.16	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
11	0.12	0.19	0.11	0.10	0.16	0.36	0.54	0.41	0.68	0.17	0.15	0.43	0.23	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
12	0.09	0.06	0.16	0.11	0.09	0.14	0.28	0.15	0.42	0.19	0.11	0.16	0.12	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
13	0.06	0.04	0.05	0.10	0.07	0.13	0.12	0.06	0.19	0.13	0.08	0.10	0.04	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1+	40.11	45.80	43.21	36.23	36.03	57.63	60.87	45.25	98.68	41.96	41.11	55.29	50.93	33.18	8.96	2.41	0.48	3.79
2+	40.09	45.39	42.94	36.08	35.52	56.58	60.51	45.23	98.54	41.74	40.53	54.62	50.53	33.15	8.94	2.41	0.47	2.21
3+	39.69	45.07	39.94	34.49	33.03	50.49	54.94	44.13	96.69	40.18	38.38	46.37	48.62	31.81	8.65	2.03	0.42	1.24
4+	34.30	43.13	37.47	29.38	27.16	38.18	44.15	36.86	91.92	38.14	34.46	37.39	37.70	28.46	6.87	1.43	0.26	0.50
5+	22.79	31.35	33.64	26.64	21.23	27.53	23.93	24.52	71.22	34.11	31.26	29.09	24.75	14.49	4.57	0.61	0.13	0.20
6+	8.84	14.57	20.41	23.38	17.40	16.66	17.59	14.50	39.93	20.88	25.97	22.89	16.14	5.49	1.85	0.27	0.05	0.08

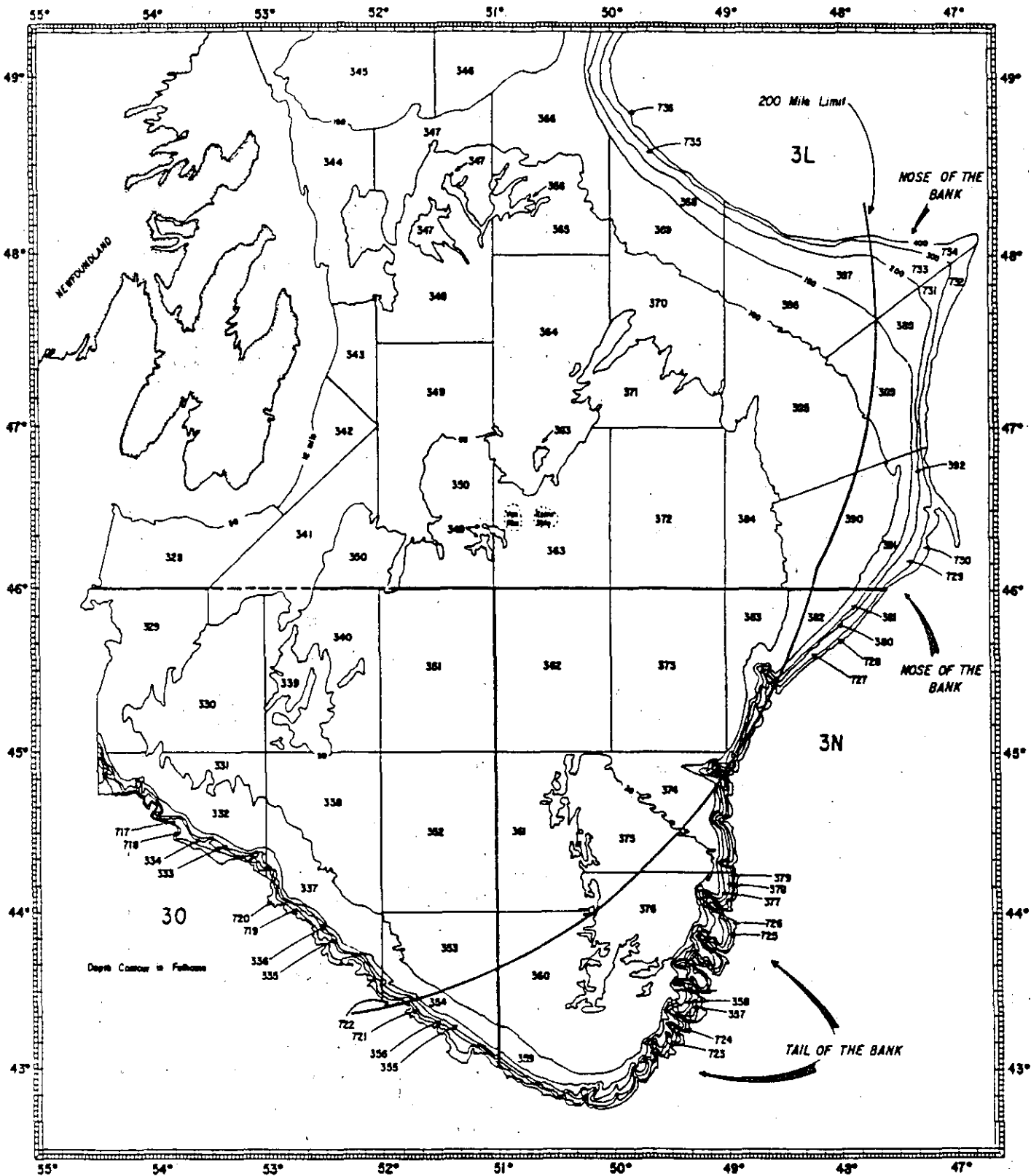


Figure 1. Stratification scheme for NAFO Divisions 3LNO showing the Canadian 200-mile limit.

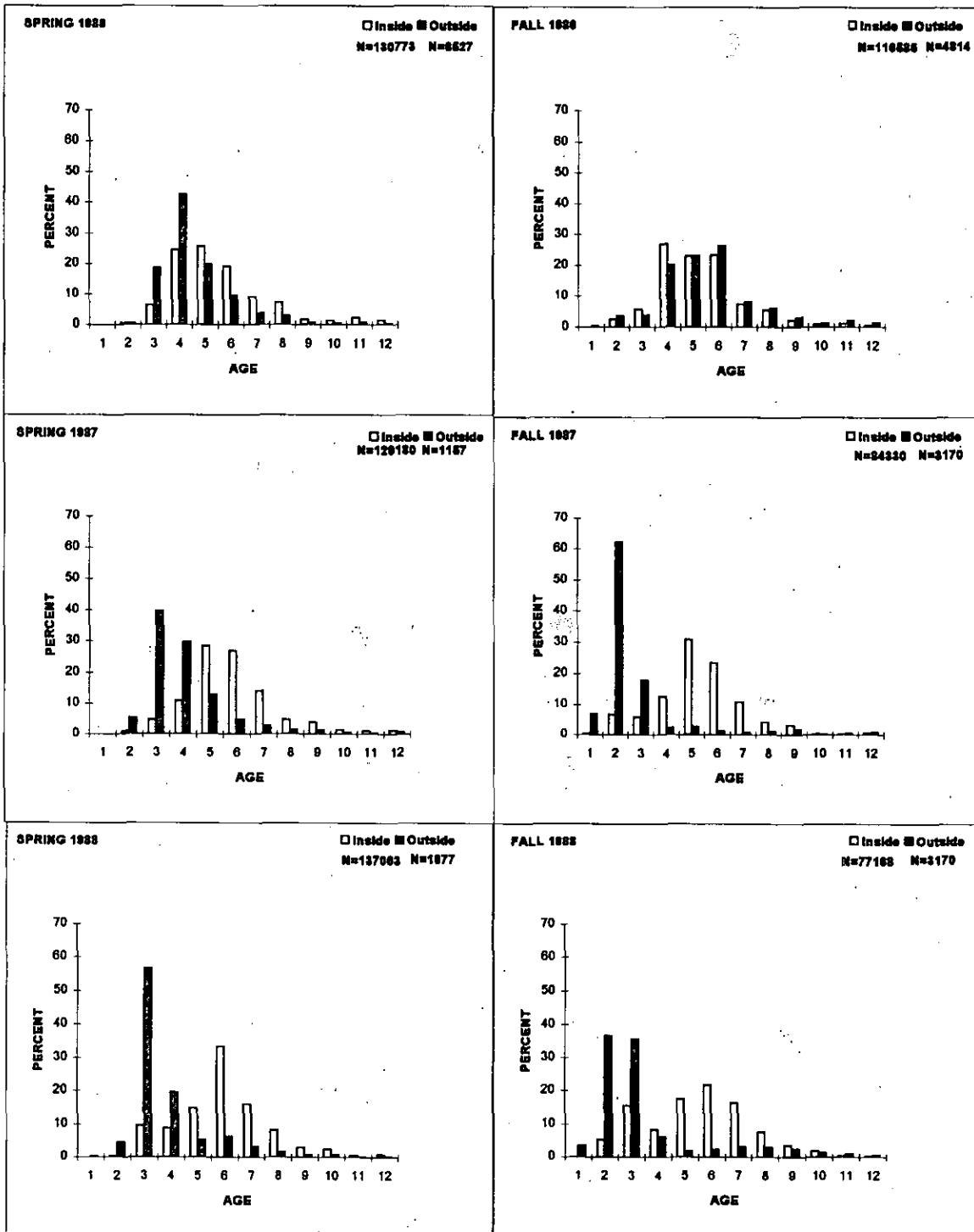


Fig 2. Percent at age composition for 3L inside and outside the 200-mile limit derived from 1986-1988 spring and fall Canadian RV surveys.

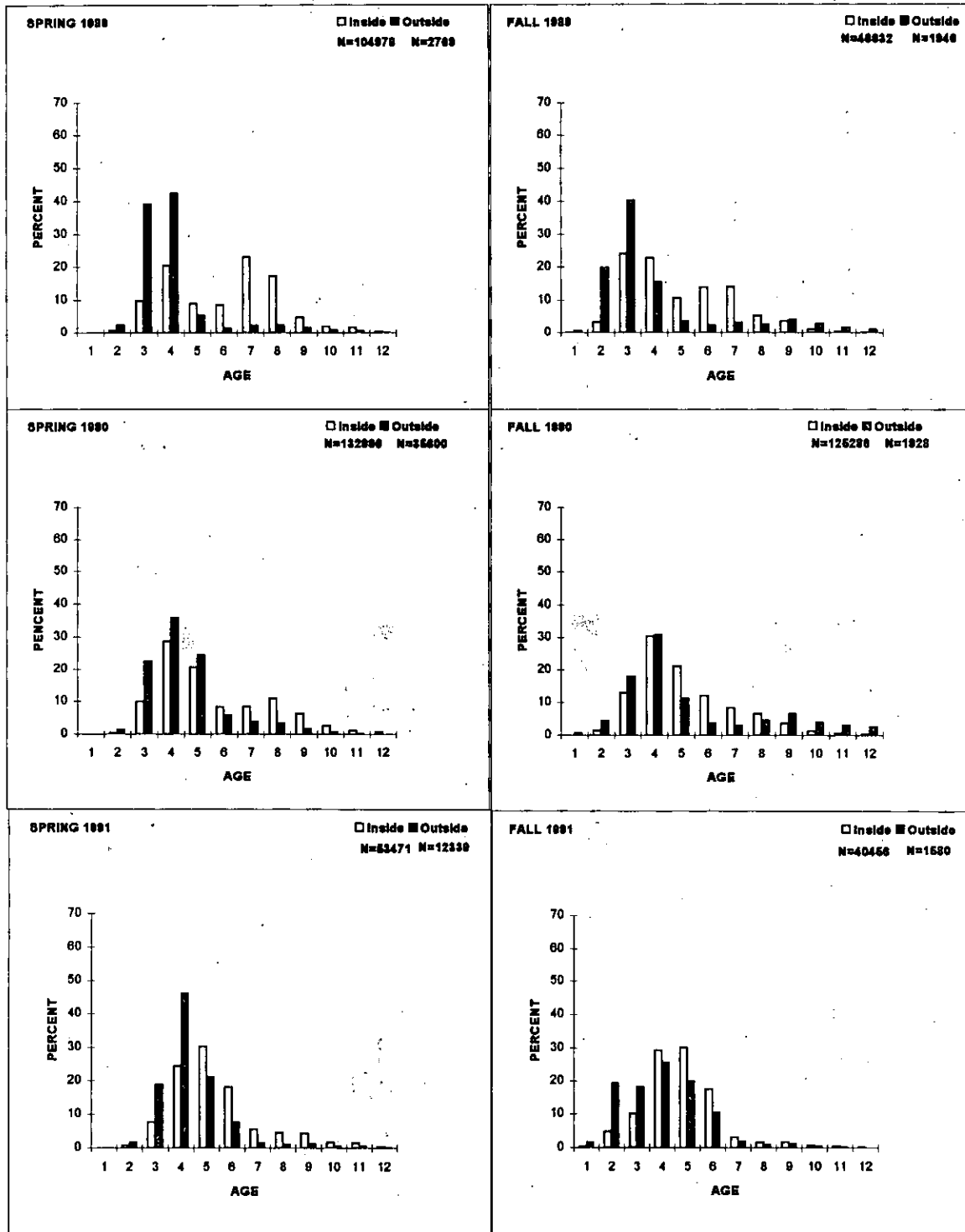


Fig 3. Percent at age composition for 3L inside and outside the 200-mile limit derived from 1989-1991 spring and fall Canadian RV surveys.

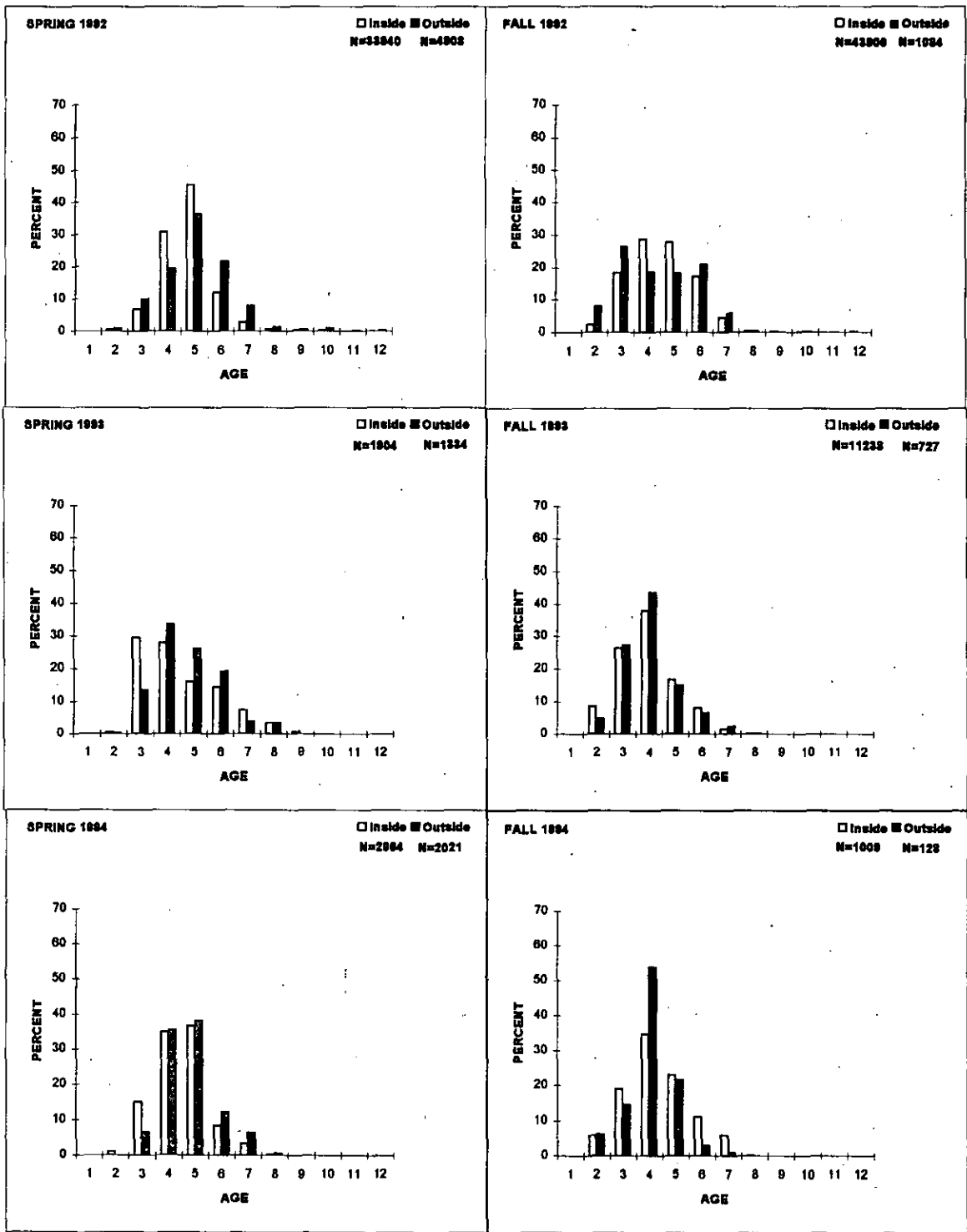


Fig 4. Percent at age composition for 3L inside and outside the 200-mile limit derived from 1992-1994 spring and fall Canadian RV surveys.

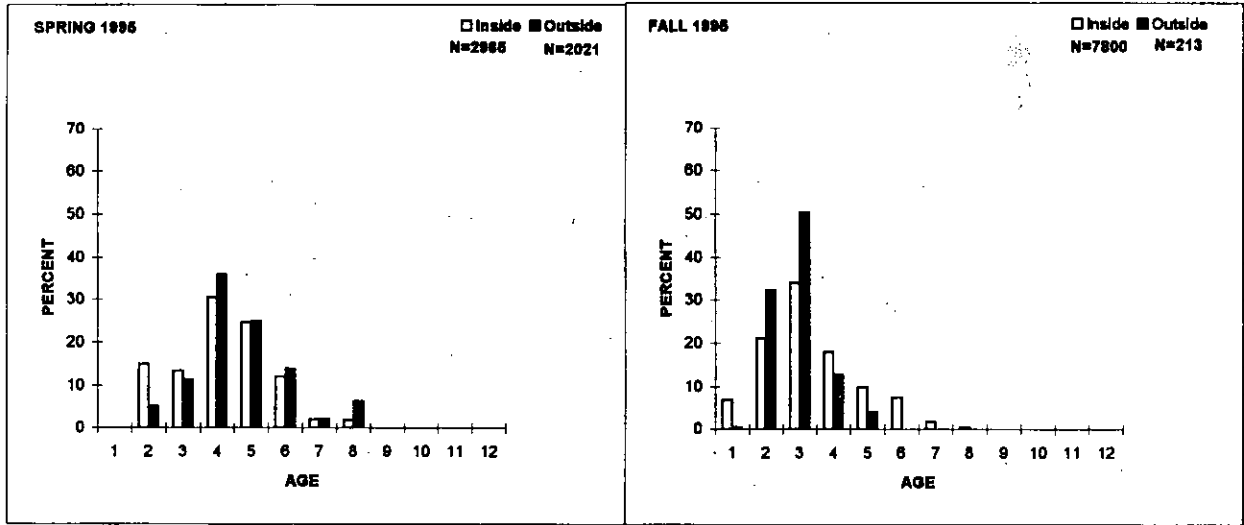


Fig 5. Percent at age composition for 3L inside and outside the 200-mile limit derived from 1995 spring and fall Canadian RV surveys.