

Catfish Processing



National
Agricultural
Statistics
Service

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Washington, D.C.

Released August 23, 1993, by the Agricultural Statistics Board. Estimates refer to July 1992 and 1993.

Catfish Processing Up 4 Percent

Farm-raised catfish processed during July totaled 37.4 million pounds round weight, up 4 percent from July 1992. The January through July 1993 cumulative total of round weight processed, at 274 million pounds, was up fractionally from the same period the previous year.

Net pounds of processed fish sold during July totaled 20.3 million pounds, an increase of 3 percent from the comparable month in 1992. Sales of fresh fish, at 7.30 million pounds, represented 36 percent of total sales and were down 8 percent from July 1992. Frozen fish sales, at 13.0 million pounds, accounted for the remaining 64 percent of total sales and were up 11 percent from the same month a year ago. Sales of whole fish represented 25 percent of the total, fillets accounted for 52 percent, and the remaining 23 percent were mostly steaks, nuggets, and value added products. Total inventory at the end of July was 8.20 million pounds, down 11 percent from the previous month and 6 percent below July 1992.

The July 1993 average price received by processors for total fresh fish was \$2.08 per pound, compared with \$1.87 last year. Prices for fresh whole fish increased 20 cents per pound to \$1.55. Prices for fresh fillets increased 14 cents to \$2.65 per pound. Total frozen fish averaged \$2.24 per pound, compared with \$2.10 per pound in July 1992. Prices for frozen whole fish increased 25 cents per pound to \$1.75 and frozen fillets increased 21 cents per pound to \$2.60 per pound.

Freshwater catfish imports during June 1993 totaled 253 thousand pounds, compared with 100 thousand pounds imported the previous year. Eighty-seven percent of the imports were from Brazil. There were no exports reported for the month of June. Import and export data were compiled by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

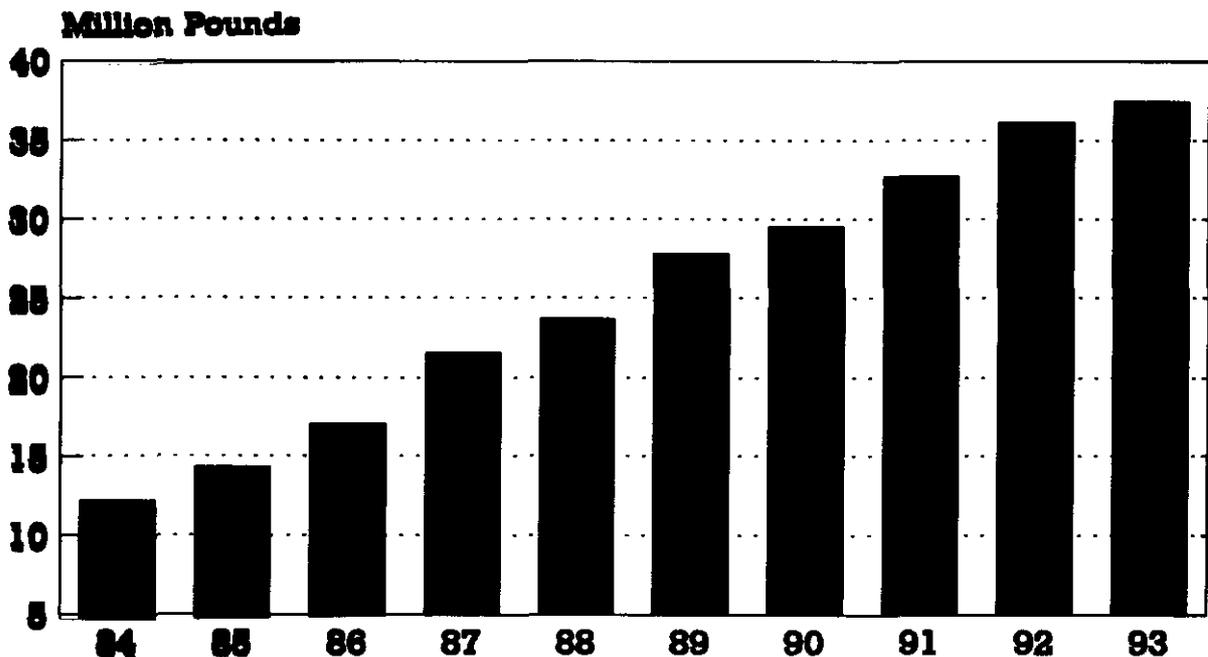
For information call Joel Moore at (202) 720-3244. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET.

**Farm-Raised Catfish: Quantity Processed and Prices Paid to Producers
by Major Processors, and United States Imports, 1992-93**

Month	Round Weight Processed				Average Price Paid to Producers ^{1/}		Imports of Catfish ^{2/}	
	Monthly		Cumulative		1992	1993	1992	1993
	1992	1993	1992	1993	Dollars per Pound		(000) Pounds	
	----- 1,000 Pounds -----							
Jan	36,200	40,327	36,200	40,327	.53	.63	237	118
Feb	39,228	40,277	75,428	80,604	.56	.67	201	183
Mar	45,048	43,521	120,476	124,125	.60	.70	243	127
Apr	41,177	39,920	161,653	164,045	.63	.71	233	328
May	39,111	37,030	200,764	201,075	.63	.72	392	204
Jun	36,813	35,496	237,577	236,571	.61	.72	100	253
Jul	36,128	37,440	273,705	274,011	.59	.72	344	
Aug	37,958		311,663		.58		169	
Sep	37,857		349,520		.59		307	
Oct	39,212		388,732		.61		187	
Nov	35,073		423,805		.62		23	
Dec	33,562		457,367		.63		491	

^{1/} Price for fish delivered to processing plant door. Price includes charges for any services provided by the processing plant, such as seining and hauling. ^{2/} Data furnished by U.S. Bureau of Census.

Catfish Processed - July United States, 1984-93 Round Weight



Catfish Processors: Sales Volume, Average Price,
and Ending Inventory, United States, July 1992-93

Item	Sales Volume		Average Price		Ending Inventory	
	1992	1993	1992	1993	1992	1993
	1,000 Pounds		Dollars per Pound		1,000 Pounds	
Fresh						
Whole Fish						
Round & Guttred Only	918	668	0.85	1.04	1/	1/
Whole Dressed	3,019	2,642	1.49	1.67	1/	1/
Total	3,937	3,310	1.35	1.55	310	247
Other						
Steaks	171	148	1.73	1.84	1/	1
Other 2/	651	601	1.85	1.91	1/	72
Total	822	749	1.82	1.90	134	73
Filletlets 3/	3,219	3,242	2.51	2.65	515	279
Total Fresh	7,978	7,301	1.87	2.08	959	599
Frozen						
Whole Fish						
Round & Guttred Only						
Whole Dressed	2,096	1,820	1.50	1.75	1,833	925
Total	2,096	1,820	1.50	1.75	1,833	925
Other						
Steaks	176	179	1.49	1.66	156	163
Other 2/	2,763	3,718	1.90	1.81	2,300	2,815
Total	2,939	3,897	1.88	1.80	2,456	2,978
Filletlets 3/	6,663	7,244	2.39	2.60	3,470	3,695
Total Frozen	11,698	12,961	2.10	2.24	7,759	7,598
Total Fresh & Frozen	19,676	20,262	2.01	2.18	8,718	8,197

1/ Not published to avoid disclosure of individual operations.

2/ Includes all products not already reported, such as nuggets, including weight of breading and added ingredients.

3/ Includes regular, shank, and strip filletlets; excludes any breaded product.

Catfish Processing Estimates

Survey Procedures: Survey data for catfish processing are collected from approximately 30 processors. All participating processors must meet the minimum criteria of having a capacity to process at least 2,000 pounds live weight of catfish per 8-hour shift. The survey is conducted entirely by NASS Headquarter's staff in Washington, D.C. NASS field offices, however, are responsible for keeping Headquarters informed of any new processing operations in their state to ensure that the survey coverage is as complete as possible. Processors are contacted either by mail or telephone. Diligent effort is made to ensure that all operations are accounted for in the estimate.

Estimation Procedures: The "Catfish Processing" report refers strictly to farm-raised fish and excludes wild capture fish. Prior to summarization, questionnaires are compared with the previous month's reports for comparable placement of data, reasonable price levels, and reasonable inventory carryover given the sales and processing totals reported. Estimates are made for those processors whose reports are not available in time to be included in the release. These plants are identified by an asterisk on page 5 of this release. Estimates are normally based on the processor's previous report and current conditions. Published totals are a straight summation of the individual reports and estimated data. Price items are weighted by the associated volumes to compute weighted average prices. The published price for total whole fish, however, reflects an adjustment to the round and gutted only price to bring it to an equivalent dressed weight price.

If a plant uses a fiscal accounting system, proration is used to convert reported data to a calendar month basis. Only national level estimates are published due to the limited number of plants involved. Generally, individual items are not published if there are less than three plants reporting, or if any one plant has 60 percent or more of the total.

One unique feature of the "Catfish Processing" report is the listing of cooperating processors by name on each month's release. This feature originally was used to solicit industry cooperation in maintaining coverage, but it has continued because of the processors' overall acceptance of this policy.

Import and export data for frozen catfish fillets, which are compiled by the Department of Commerce, are also included in this report.

Reliability: Catfish processing estimates are based on a census of all known active processors and, therefore, have no sampling variability. However, estimates may be subject to errors such as omissions, duplication, and mistakes in reporting, recording, and processing of the data. These errors are minimized through strict quality controls in the edit and summarization process, and a careful review of all reported data for consistency and reasonableness.

Revision Policy: An annual summary of reported data are sent to each plant at the end of the year. Plants are asked to identify erroneous data and return the summaries. Revisions may be necessary following a review of the summaries returned by the plants. Revisions of less than 2 percent of the existing published levels of any category will normally not be made.

Definitions Used for Catfish Processing:

Fillets - Boned sides of the fish, cut lengthwise away from the backbone.

Fresh Fish - Fish intended for immediate consumption. Also referred to as ice-packed.

Frozen Fish - Fish which are individually quick frozen and glazed (IQF) or individually bagged and bulk frozen.

Nuggets - Small fillets cut from below the rib section of the fish. Usually includes breading or added ingredients.

Round & Guttled Only - Fish with no processing done or viscera only removed.

Round Weight - A term for fish live weight.

Steaks - Cross-section cuts from larger dressed fish.

Strips - Finger size pieces of fish cut from fillets. Usually includes breading or added ingredients.

Whole Dressed - Weight of whole fish with only head, viscera, and skin removed. Generally, 60 percent of the live weight remains as dressed fish.

Processing data were compiled in cooperation with the following processors:

America's Catch	Guess Processing
Amite River Industries	Guidry Catfish Processors, Inc.
Aqua Farm Catfish, Inc.	Harvest Select
Arkansas Fresh Catfish	Kueter's Lake
Cargill Fisheries Products	La Louision
Carolina Classics Catfish, Inc.	Lake's Farm Raised Catfish, Inc.
Confish, Inc.	Limestone Fish Processors
Corbin Fish Farm	Pride of the Pond
Delta Pride Catfish, Inc.	Prime Line Catfish Co.
Dorey Fish Co.	Saul's Fish Processors
Farm Fresh Catfish Co.	Seabrook Seafood, Inc.
Fish Breeders of Idaho	Simmons Farm-Raised
Florida Aquaculture Processors	Southern Farm Fish Processors
Franklin Catfish	Southern Pride
Freshwater Farms, Inc.	Southfresh Farms Processors, Inc.

The next "Catfish Processing" report will be released at 3 p.m. ET on September 21, 1993.

