



Catfish Processing

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Catfish Processing Down 19 Percent from Last Year

Farm-raised catfish processed during August 2012 totaled 24.9 million pounds round weight, down 19 percent from August 2011. The average price paid to producers was 79.8 cents per pound for August 2012, down 4.5 cents from last month and 47.9 cents below a year ago.

Net pounds of processed fish sold during August 2012 totaled 14.4 million pounds, up 1 percent from the comparable month in 2011. Sales of fresh fish, at 5.03 million pounds, were up 15 percent from August 2011 and represented 35 percent of total sales. Frozen fish sales, at 9.42 million pounds, were down 5 percent from a year ago and accounted for the remaining 65 percent of total fish sales. Sales of whole fish represented 19 percent of the total fish sold, fillets accounted for 62 percent, and the remaining 19 percent were mostly steaks, nuggets, and value added products. The total end of the month inventory decreased 8 percent from last month but was up 51 percent from a year ago.

The total fresh and frozen average price for August 2012 was \$2.79, down 86 cents from a year ago. The August 2012 average price received by processors for total fresh fish was \$2.83 per pound, down 83 cents from last year. Prices for fresh whole fish were \$1.95 per pound, down 66 cents from August 2011. Prices for fresh fillets were down \$1.01 from a year ago at \$3.76 per pound. Total frozen fish averaged \$2.77 per pound, down 88 cents from August 2011. Prices for frozen whole dressed fish were down 30 cents at \$2.85 and frozen fillets at \$3.11 per pound were down \$1.36 from a year ago.

Imports for consumption of *Ictalurus* spp., *Pangasius* spp., and other catfish of the order Siluriformes for July 2012 totaled 22.6 million pounds, up 25 percent from the amount imported in July 2011. Imports were from Canada, China, French Polynesia, the Phillipines, Thailand, and Vietnam. The *Ictalurus* spp. imports totaled 73.0 thousand pounds, which were from Canada and China.

Fresh catfish fillet exports totaled 114.1 thousand pounds, with 68.1 thousand pounds going to Canada and the rest going to Aruba, the Bahamas, Colombia, Kuwait, and Vietnam. Exports of frozen catfish fillets reported for July 2012 totaled 5.3 thousand pounds, going to the Bahamas and South Korea.

Import and export data are compiled by the United States Census Bureau.

Farm-Raised Catfish Processed and Prices Paid to Producers by Month – United States: 2011-2012

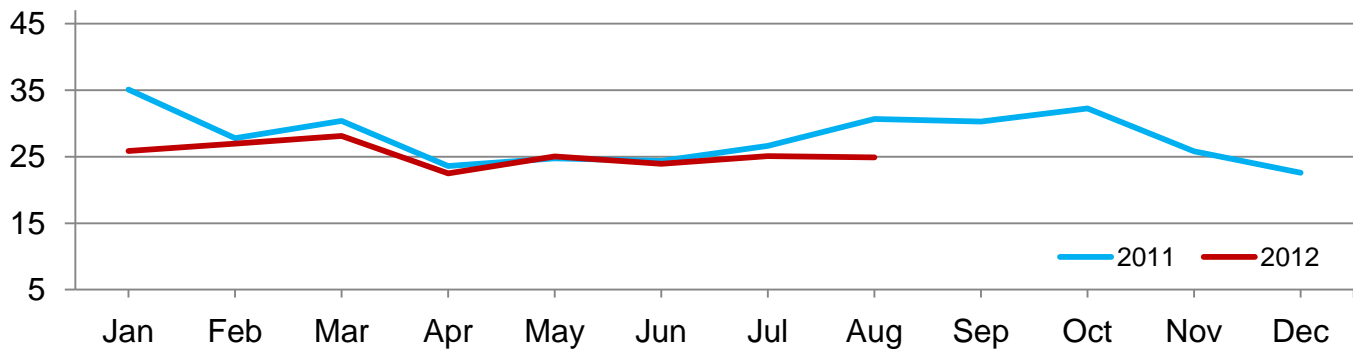
[Blank cells indicate estimation period has not yet begun]

Month	Round weight processed								
	Monthly			Cumulative			Price per pound ¹		
	2011	2012	2012 as percent of 2011	2011	2012	2012 as percent of 2011	2011	2012	Change from 2011
(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(dollars)	(dollars)	(dollars)	
January	35,076	25,843	74	35,076	25,843	74	0.931	1.248	0.317
February	27,782	26,950	97	62,858	52,793	84	1.003	1.229	0.226
March	30,372	28,098	93	93,230	80,891	87	1.075	1.201	0.126
April	23,605	22,463	95	116,835	103,354	88	1.141	1.167	0.026
May	24,749	25,009	101	141,584	128,363	91	1.169	1.038	-0.131
June	24,337	23,938	98	165,921	152,301	92	1.231	0.934	-0.297
July	26,595	25,056	94	192,516	177,357	92	1.252	0.843	-0.409
August	30,680	24,886	81	223,196	202,243	91	1.277	0.798	-0.479
September	30,271			253,467			1.275		
October	32,264			285,731			1.262		
November	25,814			311,545			1.257		
December	22,598			334,143			1.251		

¹ Quantity processed by major processors and the prices paid for fish delivered to the processing plant's door. Price includes charges for any services provided by the processing plant, such as seining and hauling. Price also includes any discounts or premiums for size or quality, but does not include adjustments based on year-end settlements.

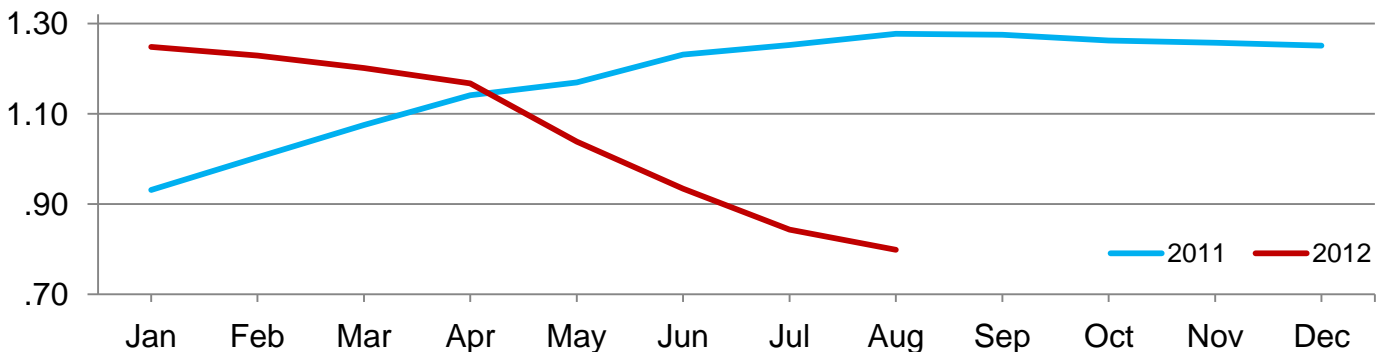
Catfish Processed – United States

Million pounds



Average Catfish Grower Price – United States

Dollars per pound



**Processed Farm-Raised Catfish Sales Volume and Average Price by Month – United States:
2011 and 2012**

Item ¹	Sales volume			Average price ²		
	August 2011	July 2012	August 2012	August 2011	July 2012	August 2012
	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(dollars per pound)	(dollars per pound)	(dollars per pound)
Fresh fish						
Whole						
Round and gutted	771	1,232	1,022	1.93	1.54	1.34
Whole dressed	930	974	1,054	3.07	2.56	2.46
Total	1,701	2,206	2,076	2.61	2.04	1.95
Other						
Steaks	52	45	45	3.52	3.19	3.13
Nuggets	384	394	407	1.91	1.58	1.55
Other	26	20	24	4.87	4.50	4.43
Total	462	459	476	2.26	1.87	1.84
Fillets	2,199	2,218	2,474	4.77	3.87	3.76
Total fresh	4,362	4,883	5,026	3.66	2.86	2.83
Frozen fish						
Whole dressed	585	573	633	3.15	2.89	2.85
Other						
Steaks	92	42	85	3.12	2.70	1.98
Nuggets	2,279	1,807	1,677	1.40	1.34	1.33
Other	498	446	507	4.08	3.15	3.18
Total	2,869	2,295	2,269	1.92	1.72	1.77
Fillets	6,417	5,525	6,514	4.47	3.37	3.11
Total frozen	9,871	8,393	9,416	3.65	2.89	2.77
Fresh and frozen fish						
Whole						
Round and gutted	771	1,232	1,022	1.93	1.54	1.34
Whole dressed	1,515	1,547	1,687	3.10	2.68	2.61
Total	2,286	2,779	2,709	2.75	2.22	2.16
Other						
Steaks	144	87	130	3.26	2.95	2.38
Nuggets	2,663	2,201	2,084	1.47	1.38	1.37
Other	524	466	531	4.12	3.21	3.24
Total	3,331	2,754	2,745	1.97	1.74	1.78
Fillets	8,616	7,743	8,988	4.55	3.51	3.29
Total fresh and frozen fish	14,233	13,276	14,442	3.65	2.87	2.79

¹ For further detail, please refer to the terms and definitions section of this report.

² Gross value FOB plant.

Processed Farm-Raised Catfish Ending Inventory by Month – United States: 2011 and 2012

Item ¹	Ending inventory		
	August 2011 (1,000 pounds)	July 2012 (1,000 pounds)	August 2012 (1,000 pounds)
Fresh fish			
Whole			
Round and gutted	(D)	(D)	(D)
Whole dressed	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total	122	89	96
Other			
Steaks	(D)	(D)	(D)
Nuggets	66	47	55
Other	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total	73	50	56
Fillets	389	289	297
Total fresh	584	428	449
Frozen fish			
Whole dressed	372	284	375
Other			
Steaks	(D)	(D)	(D)
Nuggets	1,601	615	634
Other	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total	2,212	1,159	1,237
Fillets	3,312	8,802	7,744
Total frozen	5,896	10,245	9,356
Fresh and frozen fish			
Whole			
Round and gutted	(D)	(D)	(D)
Whole dressed	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total	494	373	471
Other			
Steaks	(D)	(D)	(D)
Nuggets	1,667	662	689
Other	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total	2,285	1,209	1,293
Fillets	3,701	9,091	8,041
Total fresh and frozen fish	6,480	10,673	9,805

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

¹ For further detail, please refer to the terms and definitions section of this report.

Catfish Imports by Month – United States: 2011-2012

[Data compiled by the United States Census Bureau. Blank data cells indicate estimation period has not yet begun]

Month	Imports					
	Ictalurus spp.			Total ¹		
	2011	2012	2012 as percent of 2011	2011	2012	2012 as percent of 2011
	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)
January	1,301	2,028	156	16,276	25,551	157
February	1,015	1,317	130	13,790	15,238	111
March	211	528	250	9,133	15,280	167
April	216	534	247	13,325	19,756	148
May	113	345	305	16,314	20,100	123
June	11	352	3,200	14,643	18,847	129
July	19	73	384	18,034	22,604	125
August	39			18,383		
September	171			18,576		
October	838			20,335		
November	1,372			22,262		
December	2,113			22,608		

¹ Includes freshwater imports for consumption of *Ictalurus* spp., *Pangasius* spp., and other catfish of the order Siluriformes.

Catfish Exports by Month – United States: 2011-2012

[Data compiled by the United States Census Bureau. Blank data cells indicate estimation period has not yet begun]

Month	Exports					
	Fresh			Frozen		
	2011	2012	2012 as percent of 2011	2011	2012	2012 as percent of 2011
	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)
January	53.9	85.2	158	10.2	2.7	26
February	56.7	120.2	212	13.2	11.1	84
March	42.3	129.5	306	2.2	68.0	3,091
April	38.7	234.5	606	-	29.7	(X)
May	41.0	83.6	204	3.0	4.6	153
June	38.0	82.7	218	1.8	10.9	606
July	150.0	114.1	76	7.8	5.3	68
August	72.7			-		
September	29.4			1.1		
October	55.9			3.6		
November	42.7			2.7		
December	51.4			3.6		

- Represents zero.

(X) Not applicable.

Statistical Methodology

Survey Procedures: Survey data for catfish processing are collected from approximately 17 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 National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Headquarters staff in Washington, D.C. However, NASS field offices are responsible for informing Headquarters staff of any new processing operations in their state to ensure complete survey coverage. Processors are contacted either by mail, telephone, fax or internet. Diligent effort is made to ensure that all operations are accounted for in the estimate.

Estimating Procedures: The *Catfish Processing* report refers strictly to farm-raised fish and excludes wild captured fish. Prior to summarization, questionnaires are compared with the previous month's reports for comparable placement of data, reasonable price levels, and a 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 6 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, prorating 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.

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 catfish, which are compiled by the United States Census Bureau, are also included in this report.

Revision Policy: Revisions may be necessary in the previous month's publication based on late reports received from plants. These revisions are made to improve month to month relationships. In February, all monthly estimates for the previous year are reviewed and subject to revision. This review is primarily based on data that may have been received after the original estimates were published.

Reliability: 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.

Processing data were compiled in cooperation with the following processors:

America's Catch, Inc.	Heartland Catfish
Carolina Classics Catfish, LLC	Lake's Farm Raised Catfish, Inc.
Consolidated Catfish Producers, LLC	Pride of the Pond
Delta Supreme Fish Processors	Prime Line, Inc.
Fish Breeders of Idaho, Inc.	Seabrook Seafood, Inc.
Freshwater Farms Products, LLC	Simmons Farm Raised Catfish, Inc.
Guidry Catfish, Inc.	SouthFresh Farms
Harings Pride Catfish	Superior Fish Products
Harvest Select Catfish, Inc.	

Terms and Definitions Used for Catfish Processing Estimates

Average Price Paid to Producers: Refers to the price of fish delivered to the processing plant door. Price includes charges for any services provided by the processing plant, such as seining and hauling, but does not include any adjustments based on year-end settlements.

Fillets: Boned sides of the fish, cut lengthwise away from the backbone. Includes regular, shank, and strip fillets; excludes any breaded products.

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.

Ictalurus spp.: All species under this genus, which includes channel catfish, blue catfish, and other catfish species.

Nuggets: Small fillets cuts from below the rib section of the fish and usually includes weight of breading and added ingredients.

Other Products: Includes steaks, nuggets, and all other products not separately reported including the weight of breading and added ingredients.

Pangasius spp.: All species under this genus, which includes basa, tra, stuchi catfish, and other catfish species.

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

Round Weight: The term for a fish's live weight.

Siluriformes: The scientific order which contains all families of catfish.

Steaks: Cross-section cuts from larger dressed fish.

Strips: Finger size pieces of fish cut from fillets and 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.

Information Contacts

Listed below are the commodity specialists in the Livestock Branch of the National Agricultural Statistics Service to contact for additional information. E-mail inquiries may be sent to nass@nass.usda.gov

Dan Kerestes, Chief, Livestock Branch	(202) 720-3570
Bruce Boess, Head, Poultry and Specialty Commodities Section	(202) 720-4447
Cody Brokmeyer – Poultry Slaughter, Turkey Hatchery, Turkeys Raised	(202) 690-3237
David Colwell – Cold Storage	(202) 720-8784
LaKeya Jones – Catfish Processing, Catfish Production, Trout Production, Census of Aquaculture, Honey, Egg Products, Mink	(202) 720-0585
Kim Linonis – Layers, Eggs	(202) 690-8632
Miste Salmon – Broiler Hatchery, Chicken Hatchery	(202) 720-3244

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For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET, or e-mail: nass@nass.usda.gov.

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