

# Catfish Processing

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## Catfish Processing Up 9 Percent from Last Year

Farm-raised catfish processed during February 2010 totaled 41.0 million pounds round weight, up 9 percent from February 2009. The average price paid to producers was 76.5 cents per pound for February 2010, up 0.1 cent from last month but 0.5 cent below a year ago.

Net pounds of processed fish sold during February 2010 totaled 22.6 million pounds, up 9 percent from the comparable month in 2009. The total end of the month inventory decreased 16 percent from last month and was down 1 percent from a year ago. Sales of fresh fish, at 8.11 million pounds, were up 11 percent from February 2009 and represented 36 percent of total sales. Frozen fish sales, at 14.5 million pounds, were up 9 percent from a year ago and accounted for the remaining 64 percent of total fish sales. Sales of whole fish represented 18 percent of the total fish sold, fillets accounted for 62 percent, and the remaining 21 percent were mostly steaks, nuggets, and value added products.

The February 2010 average price received by processors for total fresh fish was \$2.34 per pound, down 12 cents from last year. Prices for fresh whole fish were \$1.49 per pound, down 18 cents from February 2009. Prices for fresh fillets were down 14 cents from a year ago at \$3.10 per pound. Total frozen fish averaged \$2.56 per pound, down 3 cents from February 2009. Prices for frozen whole dressed fish were unchanged at \$2.20 and frozen fillets at \$2.92 per pound were down 10 cents from a year ago.

Freshwater imports for consumption of *Ictalurus* spp., *Pangasius* spp., and other catfish of the order Siluriformes for January 2010 totaled 14.6 million pounds, up 49 percent from the amount imported in January 2009. Imports were from Cambodia, China, Ecuador, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam. The *Ictalurus* spp. imports totaled 3.09 million pounds, which were from China, Indonesia and Vietnam.

Fresh, boneless catfish fillet exports totaled 90.4 thousand pounds, with 56.6 thousand pounds going to Canada and the rest going to China, Ghana, Nigeria and Peru. Exports of frozen, boneless catfish fillets reported for January 2010 totaled 26.4 thousand pounds, going to the Bahamas, the British Virgin Islands, China-Hong Kong, the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles and Trinidad and Tobago.

Import and export data are compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau.

**Farm-Raised Catfish: Quantity Processed and Prices  
Received by Producers, by Month, United States, 2009-2010**

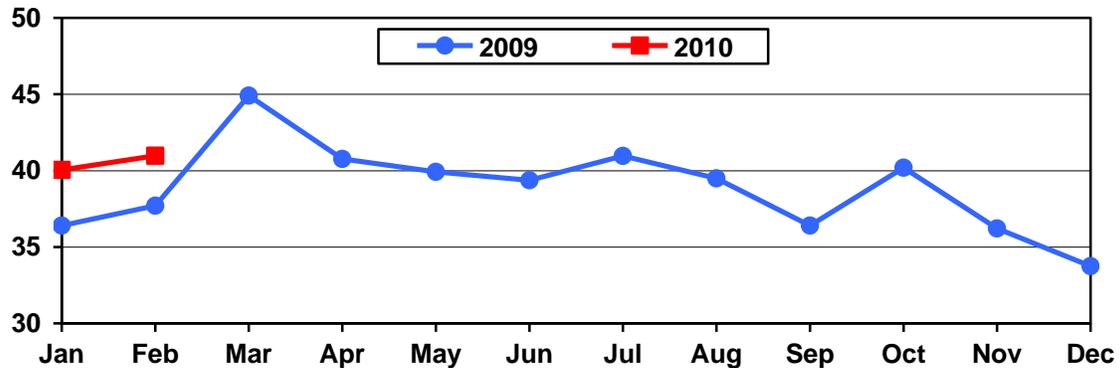
Month	Round Weight Processed								
	Monthly			Cumulative			Price per Pound <sup>1</sup>		
	2009	2010	Pct of 2009	2009	2010	Pct of 2009	2009	2010	Change from 2009
	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>
Jan <sup>2</sup>	36,406	40,042	110	36,406	40,042	110	0.810	0.764	-0.046
Feb	37,702	40,977	109	74,108	81,019	109	0.770	0.765	-0.005
Mar	44,912			119,020			0.773		
Apr	40,768			159,788			0.763		
May	39,925			199,713			0.762		
Jun	39,370			239,083			0.763		
Jul	40,966			280,049			0.771		
Aug	39,490			319,539			0.769		
Sep	36,408			355,947			0.772		
Oct	40,191			396,138			0.768		
Nov	36,211			432,349			0.765		
Dec	33,751			466,100			0.763		

<sup>1</sup> Quantity processed by major processors and the prices received 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, but does not include adjustments based on year-end settlements.

<sup>2</sup> Revised 2010 data only.

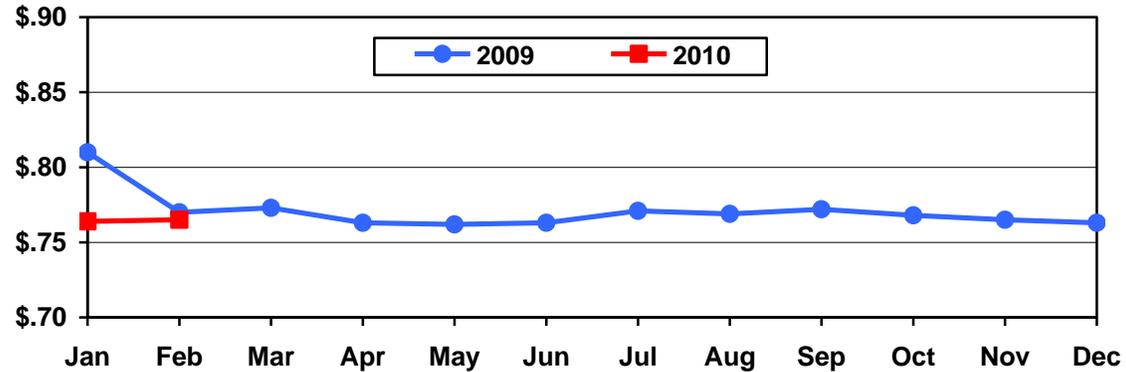
### U. S. Catfish Processed

Million Pounds



### U. S. Average Grower Price

Price per Pound



**Catfish Processors: Sales Volume and Average Price  
by Month, United States, 2009-2010**

Item <sup>1</sup>	Sales Volume			Average Price <sup>2</sup>		
	Feb 2009	Jan 2010 <sup>3</sup>	Feb 2010	Feb 2009	Jan 2010 <sup>3</sup>	Feb 2010
	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>Dollars per Pound</i>	<i>Dollars per Pound</i>	<i>Dollars per Pound</i>
Fresh Fish						
Whole						
Round & Gutted	1,263	1,360	1,580	1.16	1.08	1.06
Whole Dressed	1,489	1,451	1,576	2.04	1.93	1.87
Total	2,752	2,811	3,156	1.67	1.55	1.49
Other						
Steaks	83	99	106	2.45	2.41	2.39
Nuggets	679	551	590	1.26	1.36	1.33
Other	48	45	39	3.55	3.62	3.59
Total	810	695	735	1.52	1.66	1.60
Fillets	3,732	3,607	4,221	3.24	3.16	3.10
Total Fresh	7,294	7,113	8,112	2.46	2.38	2.34
Frozen Fish						
Whole Dressed	879	654	822	2.20	2.22	2.20
Other						
Steaks	62	52	58	2.35	2.34	2.35
Nuggets	2,801	3,056	2,819	1.16	1.19	1.23
Other	1,289	1,179	1,076	3.18	3.57	3.13
Total	4,152	4,287	3,953	1.80	1.86	1.76
Fillets	8,333	7,411	9,730	3.02	2.90	2.92
Total Frozen	13,364	12,352	14,505	2.59	2.50	2.56
Fresh & Frozen Fish						
Whole						
Round & Gutted	1,263	1,360	1,580	1.16	1.08	1.06
Whole Dressed	2,368	2,105	2,398	2.10	2.02	1.98
Total	3,631	3,465	3,978	1.80	1.68	1.64
Other						
Steaks	145	151	164	2.41	2.39	2.38
Nuggets	3,480	3,607	3,409	1.18	1.22	1.25
Other	1,337	1,224	1,115	3.19	3.57	3.15
Total	4,962	4,982	4,688	1.76	1.83	1.74
Fillets	12,065	11,018	13,951	3.09	2.99	2.97
Total Fresh & Frozen	20,658	19,465	22,617	2.54	2.46	2.48

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

<sup>2</sup> Gross value f.o.b. plant.

<sup>3</sup> Revised.

**Catfish Processors: Ending Inventory  
by Month, United States, 2009-2010**

Item <sup>1</sup>	Ending Inventory		
	Feb 2009	Jan 2010	Feb 2010
	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>
Fresh Fish			
Whole			
Round & Gutted	*	*	*
Whole Dressed	*	*	*
Total	127	193	173
Other			
Steaks	*	*	*
Nuggets	72	80	64
Other	*	*	*
Total	81	86	68
Fillet	414	616	340
Total Fresh	622	895	581
Frozen Fish			
Whole Dressed	499	884	952
Other			
Steaks	*	*	*
Nuggets	911	1,787	1,587
Other	*	*	*
Total	1,819	2,533	2,431
Fillet	8,838	9,654	7,716
Total Frozen	11,156	13,071	11,099
Fresh & Frozen Fish			
Whole			
Round & Gutted	*	*	*
Whole Dressed	*	*	*
Total	626	1,077	1,125
Other			
Steaks	*	*	*
Nuggets	983	1,867	1,651
Other	*	*	*
Total	1,900	2,619	2,499
Fillet	9,252	10,270	8,056
Total Fresh & Frozen	11,778	13,966	11,680

\* Not published to avoid disclosure of individual operations.

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

**Catfish: Imports, by Month, United States, 2009-2010**

Month	Imports <sup>1</sup>					
	Ictalurus spp.			Total <sup>2</sup>		
	2009	2010	Percent of 2009	2009	2010	Percent of 2009
	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Jan	2,344	3,091	132	9,819	14,612	149
Feb	1,225			6,527		
Mar	972			8,942		
Apr	1,364			8,548		
May	1,659			11,592		
Jun	1,088			10,577		
Jul	1,849			10,765		
Aug	1,210			11,711		
Sep	1,385			12,541		
Oct	1,584			13,857		
Nov	2,144			12,783		
Dec	2,527			11,718		

<sup>1</sup> Data compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau.

<sup>2</sup> Includes freshwater imports for consumption of *Ictalurus* spp., *Pangasius* spp., and other catfish of the order Siluriformes.

**Catfish: Exports, by Month, United States, 2009-2010**

Month	Exports <sup>1</sup>					
	Fresh			Frozen		
	2009	2010	Percent of 2009	2009	2010	Percent of 2009
	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Jan	87.0	90.4	104	0.0	26.4	
Feb	65.1			0.0		
Mar	65.1			50.6		
Apr	47.5			12.8		
May	79.1			14.2		
Jun	63.8			21.4		
Jul	68.6			20.5		
Aug	91.8			12.4		
Sep	50.6			17.7		
Oct	138.0			43.4		
Nov	59.1			30.2		
Dec	63.1			56.3		

<sup>1</sup> Data compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau.

## Reliability of Catfish Processing Estimates

**Survey Procedures:** Survey data for catfish processing are collected from approximately 18 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 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.

**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 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 U.S. 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.  
Carolina Classics Catfish, LLC  
Consolidated Catfish Producers, LLC  
Delta Supreme Fish Processors  
Fish Breeders of Idaho, Inc.  
Farm Catch Catfish Processors, Inc.  
Freshwater Farms Products, LLC  
Guidry Catfish, Inc.  
Haring's Pride Catfish

Harvest Select Catfish, Inc.  
Heartland Catfish  
Lake's Farm Raised Catfish Inc.  
Pride of the Pond  
Prime Line Inc.  
Seabrook Seafood, Inc.  
Simmons Farm Raised Catfish, Inc.  
SouthFresh Farms  
Superior Fish Products

## 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.

Dan Kerestes, Chief, Livestock Branch .....(202) 720-3570

Bruce Boess, Head, Poultry and Specialty Commodities Section.....(202) 720-4447

Doug Bounds - Poultry Slaughter, Turkey Hatchery, Turkeys Raised.....(202) 690-3237

David Colwell - Cold Storage .....(202) 720-8784

Chris Hawthorn - Catfish Processing, Catfish Production, Trout Production,  
Census of Aquaculture, Egg Products, Mink.....(202) 720-0585

Kim Linonis - Layers, Eggs .....(202) 690-8632

Troy Marshall - Broiler Hatchery, Chicken Hatchery, Honey .....(202) 720-3244

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