



# Catfish Processing

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## Catfish Processing Up 3 Percent from Last Year

Farm-raised catfish processed during December 2010 totaled 34.8 million pounds round weight, up 3 percent from December 2009. The average price paid to producers was 86.1 cents per pound for December 2010, up 2.0 cents from last month and 9.8 cents above a year ago.

Net pounds of processed fish sold during December 2010 totaled 16.9 million pounds, up 2 percent from the comparable month in 2009. Sales of fresh fish, at 6.04 million pounds, were down 1 percent from December 2009 and represented 36 percent of total sales. Frozen fish sales, at 10.8 million pounds, were up 3 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 20 percent were mostly steaks, nuggets, and value added products. The total end of the month inventory increased 2 percent from last month but was down 15 percent from a year ago.

The total fresh and frozen average price for December 2010 was \$2.60, up 14 cents from a year ago. The December 2010 average price received by processors for total fresh fish was \$2.52 per pound, up 13 cents from last year. Prices for fresh whole fish were \$1.71 per pound, up 14 cents from December 2009. Prices for fresh fillets were up 13 cents from a year ago at \$3.32 per pound. Total frozen fish averaged \$2.64 per pound, up 13 cents from December 2009. Prices for frozen whole dressed fish were up 12 cents at \$2.34 and frozen fillets at \$3.06 per pound were up 15 cents from a year ago.

Freshwater imports for consumption of *Ictalurus* spp., *Pangasius* spp., and other catfish of the order Siluriformes for November 2010 totaled 12.0 million pounds, down 6 percent from the amount imported in November 2009. Imports were from Cambodia, Canada, China, Spain, Thailand and Vietnam. The *Ictalurus* spp. imports totaled 586 thousand pounds, which were from Canada and China.

Fresh, boneless catfish fillet exports totaled 40.8 thousand pounds, with all going to Canada. Exports of frozen, boneless catfish fillets reported for November 2010 totaled 6.60 thousand pounds, going to Aruba and Kuwait.

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

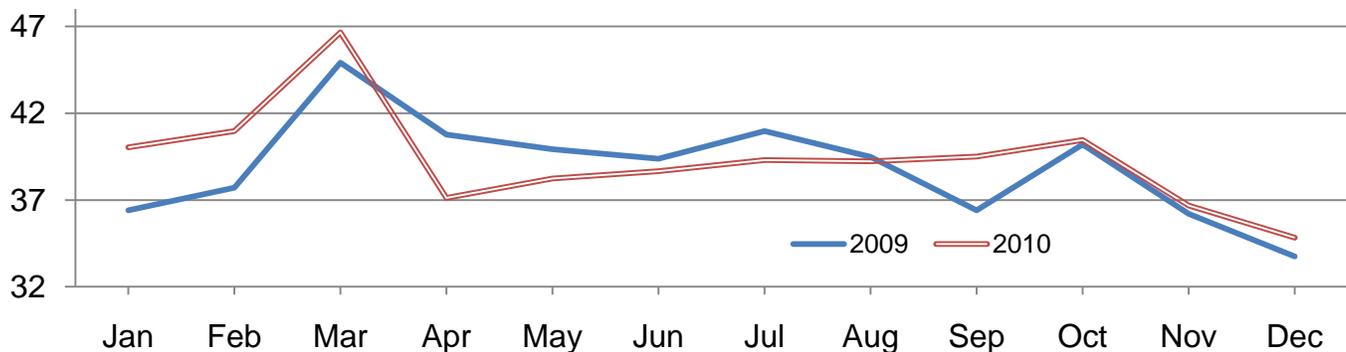
## Farm-Raised Catfish Processed and Prices Paid to Producers by Month – United States: 2009-2010

Month	Round weight processed								
	Monthly			Cumulative			Price per pound <sup>1</sup>		
	2009	2010	2010 as percent of 2009	2009	2010	2010 as percent of 2009	2009	2010	Change from 2009
(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(dollars)	(dollars)	(dollars)	
January .....	36,406	40,042	110	36,406	40,042	110	0.810	0.764	-0.046
February .....	37,702	40,977	109	74,108	81,019	109	0.770	0.765	-0.005
March .....	44,912	46,650	104	119,020	127,669	107	0.773	0.785	0.012
April .....	40,768	37,111	91	159,788	164,780	103	0.763	0.804	0.041
May .....	39,925	38,244	96	199,713	203,024	102	0.762	0.796	0.034
June .....	39,370	38,656	98	239,083	241,680	101	0.763	0.786	0.023
July .....	40,966	39,302	96	280,049	280,982	100	0.771	0.788	0.017
August .....	39,490	39,231	99	319,539	320,213	100	0.769	0.790	0.021
September .....	36,408	39,494	108	355,947	359,707	101	0.772	0.816	0.044
October .....	40,191	40,455	101	396,138	400,162	101	0.768	0.832	0.064
November .....	36,211	36,683	101	432,349	436,845	101	0.765	0.841	0.076
December .....	33,751	34,837	103	466,100	471,682	101	0.763	0.861	0.098

<sup>1</sup> 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.

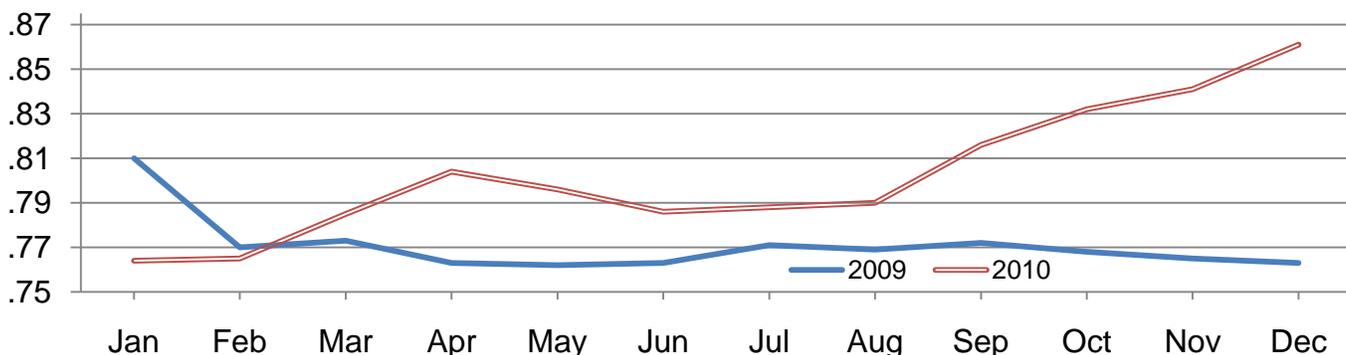
## Catfish Processed – United States

Million pounds



## Average Catfish Grower Price – United States

Dollars per pound



**Processed Farm Raised Catfish Sales Volume and Average Price by Month –  
United States: 2009 and 2010**

Item <sup>1</sup>	Sales volume			Average price <sup>2</sup>		
	December 2009	November 2010	December 2010	December 2009	November 2010	December 2010
	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(dollars per pound)	(dollars per pound)	(dollars per pound)
<b>Fresh fish</b>						
Whole						
Round and gutted .....	1,153	1,095	1,134	1.10	1.11	1.28
Whole dressed .....	1,308	1,202	1,300	1.93	2.00	2.01
Total .....	2,461	2,297	2,434	1.57	1.61	1.71
Other						
Steaks .....	83	71	82	2.41	2.48	2.60
Nuggets .....	476	406	439	1.35	1.42	1.42
Other .....	52	39	49	3.38	3.66	3.54
Total .....	611	516	570	1.67	1.74	1.77
Fillets .....	3,038	2,791	3,038	3.19	3.32	3.32
Total fresh .....	6,110	5,604	6,042	2.39	2.47	2.52
<b>Frozen fish</b>						
Whole dressed .....	506	597	548	2.22	2.23	2.34
Other						
Steaks .....	49	55	50	2.36	2.31	2.35
Nuggets .....	2,134	2,059	2,110	1.12	1.15	1.16
Other .....	617	600	614	2.93	2.97	2.96
Total .....	2,800	2,714	2,774	1.54	1.58	1.58
Fillets .....	7,138	7,026	7,486	2.91	3.04	3.06
Total frozen .....	10,444	10,337	10,808	2.51	2.61	2.64
<b>Fresh and frozen fish</b>						
Whole						
Round and gutted .....	1,153	1,095	1,134	1.10	1.11	1.28
Whole dressed .....	1,814	1,799	1,848	2.01	2.08	2.11
Total .....	2,967	2,894	2,982	1.68	1.74	1.82
Other						
Steaks .....	132	126	132	2.39	2.41	2.51
Nuggets .....	2,610	2,465	2,549	1.16	1.19	1.20
Other .....	669	639	663	2.96	3.01	3.00
Total .....	3,411	3,230	3,344	1.56	1.60	1.61
Fillets .....	10,176	9,817	10,524	2.99	3.12	3.14
Total fresh and frozen fish .....	16,554	15,941	16,850	2.46	2.56	2.60

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

<sup>2</sup> Gross value FOB plant.

## Processed Farm-Raised Catfish Ending Inventory by Month – United States: 2009 and 2010

Item <sup>1</sup>	Ending inventory		
	December 2009 (1,000 pounds)	November 2010 (1,000 pounds)	December 2010 (1,000 pounds)
<b>Fresh fish</b>			
Whole			
Round and gutted .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Whole dressed .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total .....	114	161	134
Other			
Steaks .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Nuggets .....	42	99	88
Other .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total .....	44	103	92
Fillets .....	356	403	290
Total fresh .....	514	667	516
<b>Frozen fish</b>			
Whole dressed .....	713	768	934
Other			
Steaks .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Nuggets .....	2,246	1,903	2,050
Other .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total .....	3,060	2,906	3,325
Fillets .....	10,169	7,687	7,550
Total frozen .....	13,942	11,361	11,809
<b>Fresh and frozen fish</b>			
Whole			
Round and gutted .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Whole dressed .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total .....	827	929	1,068
Other			
Steaks .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Nuggets .....	2,288	2,002	2,138
Other .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total .....	3,104	3,009	3,417
Fillets .....	10,525	8,090	7,840
Total fresh and frozen fish .....	14,456	12,028	12,325

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for 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

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

Month	Imports					
	Ictalurus spp.			Total <sup>1</sup>		
	2009	2010	2010 as percent of 2009	2009	2010	2010 as percent of 2009
	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)
January .....	2,344	3,091	132	9,819	14,612	149
February .....	1,225	2,150	176	6,527	10,421	160
March .....	972	1,179	121	8,942	7,608	85
April .....	1,364	1,220	89	8,548	8,804	103
May .....	1,659	656	40	11,592	9,971	86
June .....	1,088	651	60	10,577	10,293	97
July .....	1,849	516	28	10,765	10,268	95
August .....	1,210	70	6	11,711	9,957	85
September .....	1,385	195	14	12,541	11,626	93
October .....	1,584	196	12	13,857	15,046	109
November .....	2,144	586	27	12,783	12,032	94
December .....	2,527			11,718		

<sup>1</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

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

Month	Exports					
	Fresh			Frozen		
	2009	2010	2010 as percent of 2009	2009	2010	2010 as percent of 2009
	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)
January .....	87.0	90.4	104	0.0	26.4	(X)
February .....	65.1	58.2	89	0.0	33.8	(X)
March .....	65.1	165.8	255	50.6	16.5	33
April .....	47.5	39.5	83	12.8	28.8	225
May .....	79.1	47.3	60	14.2	20.5	144
June .....	63.8	34.2	54	21.4	14.9	70
July .....	68.6	39.5	58	20.5	29.7	145
August .....	91.8	45.4	49	12.4	3.3	27
September .....	50.6	38.6	76	17.7	16.4	93
October .....	138.0	72.5	53	43.4	20.3	47
November .....	59.1	40.8	69	30.2	6.6	22
December .....	63.1			56.3		

(X) Not applicable.

## Statistical Methodology

**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 National Agricultural Statistics Service 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 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 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.	Harvest Select Catfish, Inc.
Carolina Classics Catfish, LLC	Heartland Catfish
Consolidated Catfish Producers, LLC	Lake's Farm Raised Catfish, Inc.
Delta Supreme Fish Processors	Pride of the Pond
Fish Breeders of Idaho, Inc.	Prime Line, Inc.
Farm Catch Catfish Processors, Inc.	Seabrook Seafood, Inc.
Freshwater Farms Products, LLC	Simmons Farm Raised Catfish, Inc.
Guidry Catfish, Inc.	South Fresh Farms
Harings Pride Catfish	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. E-mail inquiries may be sent to [nass@nass.usda.gov](mailto:nass@nass.usda.gov)

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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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- Printed reports may be purchased from the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) by calling toll-free (800) 999-6779, or (703) 605-6220 if calling from outside the United States or Canada. Accepted methods of payment are Visa, MasterCard, check, or money order.

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](mailto:nass@nass.usda.gov).

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