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Catfish Processing

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Catfish Processing Down 10 Percent from Last Year

Farm-raised catfish processed during June 2007 totaled 37.3 million pounds round weight, down 10 percent from June 2006. This total is the lowest reported June round weight processed since June 1996 when 36.8 million pounds were processed. The average price paid to producers was 81.7 cents per pound for June 2007, down 2.3 cents from last month, but 1.0 cent above a year ago.

Net pounds of processed fish sold during June 2007 totaled 19.5 million pounds, down 11 percent from the comparable month in 2006. The total end of the month inventory decreased 3 percent from last month, but was up 93 percent from a year ago. Sales of fresh fish, at 7.11 million pounds, were down 8 percent from June 2006 and represented 37 percent of total sales. Frozen fish sales, at 12.3 million pounds, were down 12 percent from a year ago and accounted for the remaining 63 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 June 2007 average price received by processors for total fresh fish was $2.53 per pound, down 3 cents from last year. Prices for fresh whole fish were $1.71 per pound, down 3 cents from June 2006. Prices for fresh fillets were up 12 cents at $3.26 per pound. Total frozen fish averaged $2.54 per pound, unchanged from June 2006. Prices for frozen whole dressed fish were up 1 cent at $2.20 and frozen fillets at $2.98 per pound were unchanged from a year ago.

Freshwater imports of *Ictalurus* spp., *Pangasius* spp., and other catfish of the order Siluriformes for May 2007 totaled 5.43 million pounds, up 64 percent from the amount imported in May 2006. Imports were from Brazil, Canada, China, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Peru, Spain, Thailand, and Vietnam. The *Ictalurus* spp. imports totaled 1.39 million pounds, which were from Brazil, Canada, China, Ecuador, and Peru.

Fresh boneless catfish fillet exports totaled 51.8 thousand pounds, with all going to Canada. Exports of frozen, boneless catfish fillets reported for May 2007 totaled 5.1 thousand pounds, with all going to Iceland.

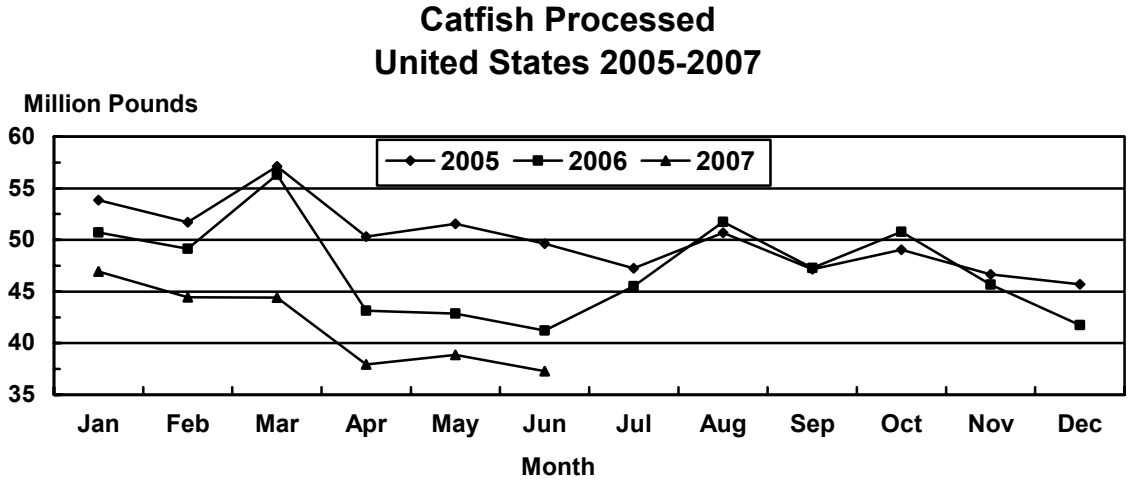
Import and export data are compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau.

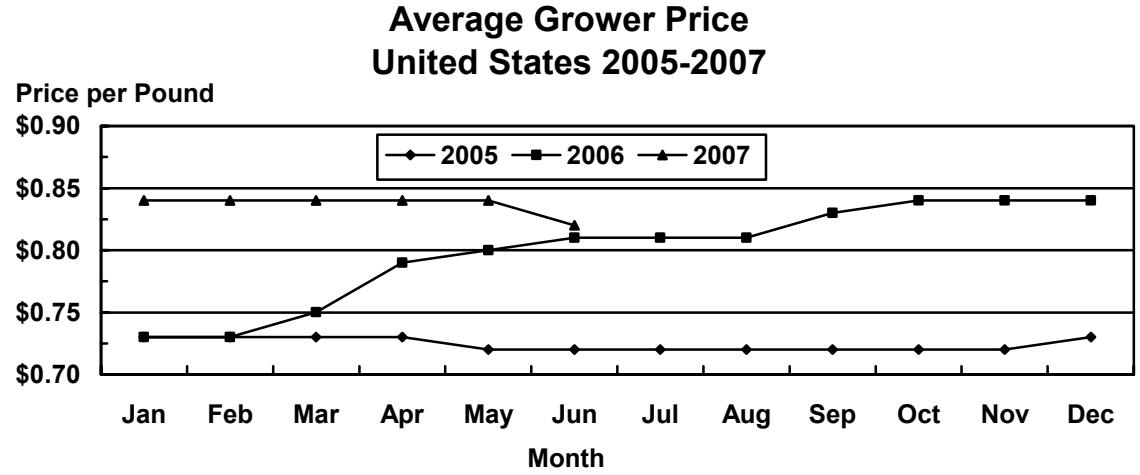
Farm-Raised Catfish: Quantity Processed and Prices Received by Producers, United States, 2006-2007

Month	Round Weight Processed								
	Monthly			Cumulative			Price per Pound [1]		
	2006	2007	Pct of 2006	2006	2007	Pct of 2006	2006	2007	Change from 2006
	1,000 Pounds	*1,000 Pounds*	*Percent*	*1,000 Pounds*	*1,000 Pounds*	*Percent*	*Dollars*	*Dollars*	*Dollars*
Jan	50,703	46,957	93	50,703	46,957	93	0.727	0.838	0.111
Feb	49,145	44,439	90	99,848	91,396	92	0.729	0.838	0.109
Mar	56,315	44,397	79	156,163	135,793	87	0.745	0.838	0.093
Apr	43,126	37,954	88	199,289	173,747	87	0.785	0.841	0.056
May [2]	42,865	38,867	91	242,154	212,614	88	0.796	0.840	0.044
Jun	41,214	37,275	90	283,368	249,889	88	0.807	0.817	0.010
Jul	45,528			328,896			0.812		
Aug	51,736			380,632			0.811		
Sep	47,296			427,928			0.832		
Oct	50,788			478,716			0.836		
Nov	45,680			524,396			0.837		
Dec	41,735			566,131			0.838		

[1] 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.

[2] Revised 2007 data only.





Catfish Processors: Sales Volume and Average Price
United States, June 2006-2007

Item [1]	Sales Volume			Average Price [2]		
	Jun 2006	May 2007 [3]	Jun 2007	Jun 2006	May 2007 [3]	Jun 2007
	1,000 Pounds	*1,000 Pounds*	*1,000 Pounds*	*Dollars per Pound*	*Dollars per Pound*	*Dollars per Pound*
Fresh Fish						
Whole						
Round & Gutted	1,212	1,397	1,380	1.30	1.24	1.24
Whole Dressed	1,252	1,320	1,300	2.08	2.13	2.12
Total	2,464	2,717	2,680	1.74	1.71	1.71
Other						
Steaks	74	89	77	2.41	2.45	2.44
Nuggets	573	621	536	1.39	1.35	1.36
Other	160	139	108	3.27	3.46	3.44
Total	807	849	721	1.86	1.81	1.79
Fillets	4,446	4,282	3,710	3.14	3.27	3.26
Total Fresh	7,717	7,848	7,111	2.56	2.57	2.53
Frozen Fish						
Whole Dressed	889	915	832	2.19	2.23	2.20
Other						
Steaks	84	106	85	2.26	2.12	2.16
Nuggets	2,577	2,561	2,089	1.04	0.94	0.94
Other	1,346	1,320	1,038	2.70	2.45	2.51
Total	4,007	3,987	3,212	1.62	1.47	1.48
Fillets	9,127	9,316	8,301	2.98	2.99	2.98
Total Frozen	14,023	14,218	12,345	2.54	2.52	2.54
Fresh & Frozen Fish						
Whole						
Round & Gutted	1,212	1,397	1,380	1.30	1.24	1.24
Whole Dressed	2,141	2,235	2,132	2.13	2.17	2.15
Total	3,353	3,632	3,512	1.86	1.84	1.82
Other						
Steaks	158	195	162	2.33	2.27	2.29
Nuggets	3,150	3,182	2,625	1.10	1.02	1.03
Other	1,506	1,459	1,146	2.76	2.55	2.60
Total	4,814	4,836	3,933	1.66	1.53	1.54
Fillets	13,573	13,598	12,011	3.03	3.08	3.07
Total Fresh & Frozen	21,740	22,066	19,456	2.55	2.54	2.53

[1] For further detail, please refer to the terms and definitions sections of this report.
[2] Gross value f.o.b. plant.
[3] Revised.

Catfish Processors: Ending Inventory
United States, June 2006-2007

Item [1]	Ending Inventory		
	Jun 2006	May 2007 [2]	Jun 2007
	1,000 Pounds	*1,000 Pounds*	*1,000 Pounds*
Fresh Fish			
Whole			
Round & Gutted	*	*	*
Whole Dressed	*	*	*
Total	127	167	119
Other			
Steaks	*	*	*
Nuggets	194	91	66
Other	*	*	*
Total	199	97	70
Fillets	472	418	308
Total Fresh	798	682	497
Frozen Fish			
Whole Dressed	770	982	898
Other			
Steaks	38	154	*
Nuggets	1,878	857	1,125
Other	779	1,770	*
Total	2,695	2,781	2,776
Fillets	3,070	10,182	9,957
Total Frozen	6,535	13,945	13,631
Fresh & Frozen Fish			
Whole			
Round & Gutted	*	*	*
Whole Dressed	*	*	*
Total	897	1,149	1,017
Other			
Steaks	*	*	*
Nuggets	2,072	948	1,191
Other	*	*	*
Total	2,894	2,878	2,846
Fillets	3,542	10,600	10,265
Total Fresh & Frozen	7,333	14,627	14,128

* Not published to avoid disclosure of individual operations.
[1] For further detail, please refer to the terms and definitions sections of this report.
[2] Revised.

Farm-Raised Catfish: Imports, United States, 2006-2007

Month	Imports [1]					
	Ictalurus spp.			Total [2]		
	2006	2007	Percent of 2006	2006	2007	Percent of 2006
	1,000 Pounds	*1,000 Pounds*	*Percent*	*1,000 Pounds*	*1,000 Pounds*	*Percent*
Jan	415	4,381	1,056	2,644	12,056	456
Feb	417	3,030	727	2,491	7,582	304
Mar	388	2,101	541	3,267	6,430	197
Apr	403	1,139	283	3,119	5,097	163
May	356	1,394	392	3,306	5,434	164
Jun	909			4,424		
Jul	547			5,232		
Aug	819			8,991		
Sep	391			9,091		
Oct	1,406			10,672		
Nov	2,399			12,830		
Dec	3,421			8,897		

[1] Data compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau.
[2] Includes freshwater imports for consumption of *Ictalurus* spp., *Pangasius* spp., and other catfish of the order Siluriformes.

Farm-Raised Catfish: Exports, United States, 2006-2007

Month	Exports [1]					
	Fresh			Frozen		
	2006	2007	Percent of 2006	2006	2007	Percent of 2006
	1,000 Pounds	*1,000 Pounds*	*Percent*	*1,000 Pounds*	*1,000 Pounds*	*Percent*
Jan	73.5	69.7	95	34.3	0.0	
Feb	63.7	69.1	108	15.3	29.9	195
Mar	78.8	252.8	321	8.6	14.3	166
Apr	68.4	73.5	107	21.2	0.0	
May	58.3	51.8	89	19.0	5.1	27
Jun	49.7			12.5		
Jul	83.0			36.7		
Aug	106.6			15.2		
Sep	73.6			10.5		
Oct	56.4			11.8		
Nov	40.1			23.5		
Dec	79.3			4.9		

[1] Data compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Reliability of Catfish Processing Estimates

Survey Procedures: Survey data for catfish processing are collected from approximately 20 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.. However, NASS field offices are responsible for informing Headquarter's 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, Inc.
Consolidated Catfish Co., LLC
Delta Pride Catfish, Inc.
Delta Supreme Fish Processing
Fish Breeders of Idaho, Inc.
Farm Catch Catfish Processors, Inc.
Freshwater Farms Products, LLC
Guidry Catfish Processors, Inc.
Haring's Pride Catfish
Harvest Select Catfish, Inc.
Heartland Catfish
Lake's Farm Raised Catfish, Inc.
Pride of the Pond
Prime Line Catfish Co.
Seabrook Seafood, Inc.
Simmons Farm Raised Catfish, Inc.
Southern Pride Catfish, LLC
SouthFresh Farms
Superior Fish Processors

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 & Gutted 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.

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David Colwell - Cold Storage .....(202) 720-8784
Fleming Gibson - Egg Products, Poultry Slaughter, Catfish Processing, Mink .....(202) 690-3237
Darin Jantzi - Layers, Eggs .....(202) 720-3570
Sharyn Lavender - Broiler Hatchery, Chicken Hatchery, Honey .....(202) 720-3244
Toby Paterson - Catfish Production, Trout Production, Census of Aquaculture, Turkey Hatchery, Turkeys Raised .....(202) 720-0585

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