



Catfish Processing

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Catfish Processing Down 37 Percent from Last Year

Farm-raised catfish processed during March 2011 totaled 29.4 million pounds round weight, down 37 percent from March 2010. The average price paid to producers was \$1.07 per pound for March 2011, up 6.9 cents from last month and 28.7 cents above a year ago.

Net pounds of processed fish sold during March 2011 totaled 17.6 million pounds, down 22 percent from the comparable month in 2010. Sales of fresh fish, at 5.84 million pounds, were down 31 percent from March 2010 and represented 33 percent of total sales. Frozen fish sales, at 11.8 million pounds, were down 16 percent from a year ago and accounted for the remaining 67 percent of total fish sales. Sales of whole fish represented 19 percent of the total fish sold, fillets accounted for 57 percent, and the remaining 24 percent were mostly steaks, nuggets, and value added products. The total end of the month inventory decreased 32 percent from last month and was down 49 percent from a year ago.

The total fresh and frozen average price for March 2011 was \$3.22, up 80 cents from a year ago. The March 2011 average price received by processors for total fresh fish was \$3.12 per pound, up 83 cents from last year. Prices for fresh whole fish were \$2.17 per pound, up 67 cents from March 2010. Prices for fresh fillets were up \$1 from a year ago at \$4.23 per pound. Total frozen fish averaged \$3.26 per pound, up 76 cents from March 2010. Prices for frozen whole dressed fish were up 46 cents at \$2.68 and frozen fillets at \$3.76 per pound were up 89 cents from a year ago.

Freshwater imports for consumption of *Ictalurus* spp., *Pangasius* spp., and other catfish of the order Siluriformes for February 2011 totaled 13.8 million pounds, up 32 percent from the amount imported in February 2010. Imports were from Cambodia, Canada, China, Mexico, and Vietnam. The *Ictalurus* spp. imports totaled 1.02 million pounds, which were from Canada, China, and Mexico.

Fresh, boneless catfish fillet exports totaled 56.7 thousand pounds, with 46.0 thousand pounds going to Canada and the rest going to the Netherlands Antilles. Exports of frozen, boneless catfish fillets reported for February 2011 totaled 13.2 thousand pounds, going to Aruba, the Bahamas, Brazil, and Nigeria.

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: 2010-2011

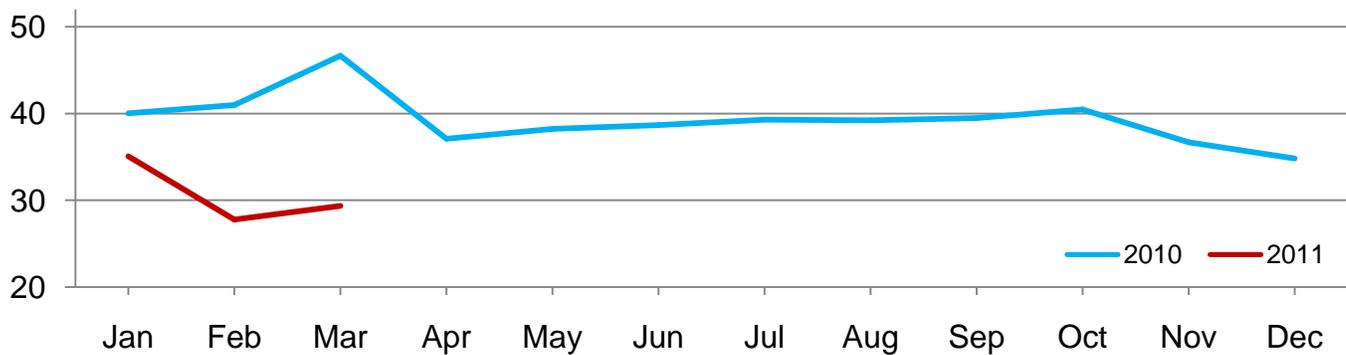
[Blank cells indicate estimation period has not yet begun.]

Month	Round weight processed								
	Monthly			Cumulative			Price per pound ¹		
	2010	2011	2011 as percent of 2010	2010	2011	2011 as percent of 2010	2010	2011	Change from 2010
(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(dollars)	(dollars)	(dollars)	
January	40,042	35,076	88	40,042	35,076	88	0.764	0.931	0.167
February	40,977	27,782	68	81,019	62,858	78	0.765	1.003	0.238
March	46,650	29,356	63	127,669	92,214	72	0.785	1.072	0.287
April	37,111			164,780			0.804		
May	38,244			203,024			0.796		
June	38,656			241,680			0.786		
July	39,302			280,982			0.788		
August	39,231			320,213			0.790		
September	39,494			359,707			0.816		
October	40,455			400,162			0.832		
November	36,683			436,845			0.841		
December	34,838			471,683			0.861		

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.

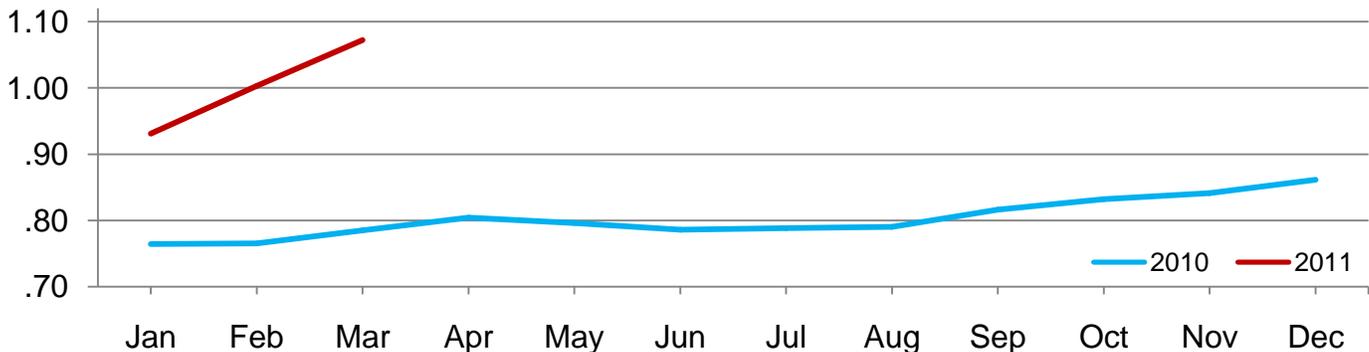
Catfish Processed – United States

Million pounds



Average Catfish Grower Price – United States

Dollars per pound



**Processed Farm-Raised Catfish Sales Volume and Average Price by Month – United States:
2010 and 2011**

Item ¹	Sales volume			Average price ²		
	March 2010	February 2011	March 2011	March 2010	February 2011	March 2011
	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(dollars per pound)	(dollars per pound)	(dollars per pound)
Fresh fish						
Whole						
Round and gutted	1,919	943	1,346	1.04	1.60	1.65
Whole dressed	1,824	1,103	1,216	1.92	2.37	2.64
Total	3,743	2,046	2,562	1.50	2.06	2.17
Other						
Steaks	112	78	58	2.38	2.75	2.92
Nuggets	629	421	459	1.34	1.62	1.78
Other	66	36	38	3.38	4.07	4.28
Total	807	535	555	1.65	1.95	2.07
Fillets	3,905	2,650	2,719	3.18	3.75	4.23
Total fresh	8,455	5,231	5,836	2.29	2.91	3.12
Frozen fish						
Whole dressed	935	762	815	2.22	2.59	2.68
Other						
Steaks	98	51	71	2.11	2.69	2.90
Nuggets	2,753	1,773	2,191	1.21	1.43	1.48
Other	859	914	1,443	2.94	3.26	3.82
Total	3,710	2,738	3,705	1.63	2.06	2.42
Fillets	9,338	6,833	7,238	2.87	3.56	3.76
Total frozen	13,983	10,333	11,758	2.50	3.09	3.26
Fresh and frozen fish						
Whole						
Round and gutted	1,919	943	1,346	1.04	1.60	1.65
Whole dressed	2,759	1,865	2,031	2.02	2.46	2.66
Total	4,678	2,808	3,377	1.65	2.20	2.29
Other						
Steaks	210	129	129	2.25	2.73	2.91
Nuggets	3,382	2,194	2,650	1.23	1.47	1.53
Other	925	950	1,481	2.97	3.29	3.83
Total	4,517	3,273	4,260	1.64	2.05	2.37
Fillets	13,243	9,483	9,957	2.96	3.61	3.89
Total fresh and frozen fish	22,438	15,564	17,594	2.42	3.03	3.22

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: 2010 and 2011

Item ¹	Ending inventory		
	March 2010 (1,000 pounds)	February 2011 (1,000 pounds)	March 2011 (1,000 pounds)
Fresh fish			
Whole			
Round and gutted	(D)	(D)	(D)
Whole dressed	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total	222	139	120
Other			
Steaks	(D)	(D)	(D)
Nuggets	192	86	73
Other	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total	202	95	75
Fillets	788	362	313
Total fresh	1,212	596	508
Frozen fish			
Whole dressed	1,039	830	509
Other			
Steaks	(D)	(D)	(D)
Nuggets	1,629	2,120	1,681
Other	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total	2,425	2,842	2,072
Fillets	7,243	4,772	3,048
Total frozen	10,707	8,444	5,629
Fresh and frozen fish			
Whole			
Round and gutted	(D)	(D)	(D)
Whole dressed	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total	1,261	969	629
Other			
Steaks	(D)	(D)	(D)
Nuggets	1,821	2,206	1,754
Other	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total	2,627	2,937	2,147
Fillets	8,031	5,134	3,361
Total fresh and frozen fish	11,919	9,040	6,137

(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: 2010-2011

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

Month	Imports					
	Ictalurus spp.			Total ¹		
	2010	2011	2011 as percent of 2010	2010	2011	2011 as percent of 2010
	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)
January	3,091	1,301	42	14,612	16,276	111
February	2,150	1,015	47	10,421	13,790	132
March	1,179			7,608		
April	1,220			8,804		
May	656			9,971		
June	651			10,293		
July	516			10,268		
August	70			9,957		
September	195			11,626		
October	196			15,046		
November	586			12,032		
December	1,269			16,897		

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

Catfish Exports by Month – United States: 2010-2011

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

Month	Exports					
	Fresh			Frozen		
	2010	2011	2011 as percent of 2010	2010	2011	2011 as percent of 2010
	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)
January	90.4	53.9	60	26.4	10.2	39
February	58.2	56.7	97	33.8	13.2	39
March	165.8			16.5		
April	39.5			28.8		
May	47.3			20.5		
June	34.2			14.9		
July	39.5			29.7		
August	45.4			3.3		
September	38.6			16.4		
October	72.5			20.3		
November	40.8			6.6		
December	45.7			1.3		

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

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) 720-3106
David Colwell – Cold Storage	(202) 720-8784
Kim Linonis – Layers, Eggs	(202) 690-8632
Troy Marshall – Broiler Hatchery, Chicken Hatchery, Honey	(202) 720-3244
Miste Salmon – Catfish Processing, Catfish Production, Trout Production, Census of Aquaculture, Egg Products, Mink	(202) 720-0585

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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.

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