

Catfish Processing



National
Agricultural
Statistics
Service

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Washington, D.C.

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Catfish Processing Up 3 Percent

Farm-raised catfish processed during February totaled 40.3 million pounds round weight, up 3 percent from February 1992. The January through February 1993 cumulative total of round weight processed, at 80.6 million pounds, was up 7 percent from the same period the previous year.

Net pounds of processed fish sold during February totaled 20.8 million pounds, a decrease of 2 percent from the comparable month in 1992. Sales of fresh fish, at 9.03 million pounds, represented 43 percent of total sales and were down 3 percent from February 1992. Frozen fish sales, at 11.7 million pounds, accounted for the remaining 57 percent of total sales and were down fractionally from the same month a year ago. Sales of whole fish represented 29 percent of the total, fillets accounted for 49 percent, and the remaining 22 percent were mostly steaks, nuggets, and value added products.

The February 1993 average price received by processors for total fresh fish was \$1.92 per pound, compared with \$1.78 last year. Prices for fresh whole fish increased 10 cents per pound to \$1.41, while prices for fresh fillets increased 13 cents to \$2.55 per pound. Total frozen fish averaged \$2.26 per pound, compared with \$2.05 per pound in February 1992. Prices for frozen whole fish increased 17 cents per pound to \$1.65, while prices for fillets increased 19 cents to \$2.55 per pound.

Freshwater catfish imports during January 1993 totaled 118 thousand pounds, compared with 237 thousand pounds the previous year. The majority of imports were from Brazil. Exports totaled 30.9 thousand pounds for January, all of which were to the United Kingdom. Import and export data were compiled by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

For information call Joel Moore (202) 720-3244. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET.

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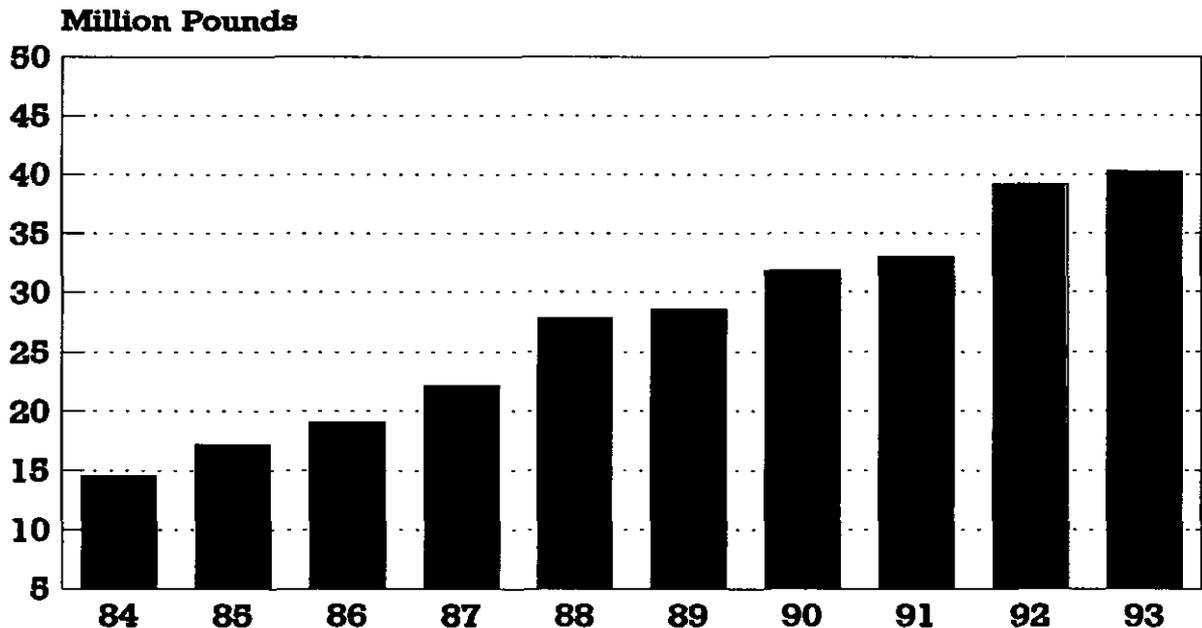
**Farm-Raised Catfish: Quantity Processed and Prices Paid to Producers
by Major Processors, and United States Imports, 1992-93**

Month	Round Weight Processed				Average Price Paid to Producers ^{1/}		Imports of Catfish ^{2/}	
	Monthly		Cumulative		1992	1993	1992	1993
	1992	1993	1992	1993	1992	1993	1992	1993
	----- 1,000 Pounds -----				Dollars per Pound		(000) Pounds	
Jan	36,200	40,327	36,200	40,327	.53	.63	237	118
Feb	39,228	40,277	75,428	80,604	.56	.67	201	
Mar	45,048		120,476		.60		243	
Apr	41,177		161,653		.63		233	
May	39,111		200,764		.63		392	
Jun	36,813		237,577		.61		100	
Jul	36,128		273,705		.59		344	
Aug	37,958		311,663		.58		169	
Sep	37,857		349,520		.59		307	
Oct	39,212		388,732		.61		187	
Nov	35,073		423,805		.62		23	
Dec	33,562		457,367		.63		491	

^{1/} Price for fish delivered to processing plant door. Price includes charges for any services provided by the processing plant, such as seining and hauling.

^{2/} Data furnished by U.S. Bureau of Census.

CATFISH PROCESSED - FEBRUARY UNITED STATES, 1984-93 ROUND WEIGHT



Catfish Processors: Sales Volume, Average Price,
and Ending Inventory, United States, February 1992-93

Item	Sales Volume		Average Price		Ending Inventory	
	1992	1993	1992	1993	1992	1993
	- 1,000 Pounds -		Dollars per Pound		1,000 Pounds	
Fresh						
Whole Fish						
Round & Gutted Only	1,089	1,114	0.84	0.97	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
Whole Dressed	3,704	3,271	1.43	1.53	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
Total	4,793	4,385	1.31	1.41	335	307
Other						
Steaks	149	183	1.70	1.99	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
Other <u>2/</u>	771	772	1.68	1.80	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
Total	920	955	1.69	1.83	123	230
Fillets <u>3/</u>	3,608	3,692	2.42	2.55	510	708
Total Fresh	9,321	9,032	1.78	1.92	968	1,245
Frozen						
Whole Fish						
Round & Gutted Only						
Whole Dressed	2,121	1,737	1.48	1.65	2,235	1,805
Total	2,121	1,737	1.48	1.65	2,235	1,805
Other						
Steaks	113	107	1.59	1.70	112	196
Other <u>2/</u>	3,492	3,418	1.87	2.02	1,605	3,361
Total	3,605	3,525	1.86	2.01	1,717	3,557
Fillets <u>3/</u>	6,053	6,480	2.36	2.55	3,775	4,567
Total Frozen	11,779	11,742	2.05	2.26	7,727	9,929

1/ Not published to avoid disclosure of individual operations.

2/ Includes all products not already reported, such as nuggets, including weight of breading and added ingredients.

3/ Includes regular, shank, and strip fillets; excludes any breaded product.

Catfish Processing Estimates

Survey Procedures: Survey data for catfish processing are collected from approximately 30 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. NASS field offices, however, are responsible for keeping Headquarters informed of any new processing operations in their state to ensure that the survey coverage is as complete as possible. Processors are contacted either by mail or telephone. 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 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 5 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, proration 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. Generally, individual items are not published if there are less than three plants reporting, or if any one plant has 60 percent or more of the total.

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 frozen catfish fillets, which are compiled by the Department of Commerce, are also included in this report.

Reliability: Catfish processing 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.

Revision Policy: An annual summary of reported data are sent to each plant at the end of the year. Plants are asked to identify erroneous data and return the summaries. Revisions may be necessary following a review of the summaries returned by the plants. Revisions of less than 2 percent of the existing published levels of any category will normally not be made.

Definitions Used for Catfish Processing:

Filletts - Boned sides of the fish, cut lengthwise away from the backbone.

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.

Nuggets - Small filletts cut from below the rib section of the fish. Usually includes breading or added ingredients.

Round and Gutted Only - Fish with no processing done or viscera only removed.

Round Weight - A term for fish live weight.

Steaks - Cross-section cuts from larger dressed fish.

Strips - Finger size pieces of fish cut from filletts. 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.

Processing data were compiled in cooperation with the following processors:

America's Catch	Harvest Select
Amite River Industries	King's, Inc.
Aqua Farm Catfish, Inc.	Kueter's Lake
Cargill Fisheries Products	La Louision
Carolina Classics Catfish, Inc.	Lake's Farm Raised Catfish, Inc.
Confish, Inc.	Limestone Fish Processors
Corbin Fish Farm	Pisces
Delta Pride Catfish, Inc.	Pride of the Pond
Dorey Fish Co.	Prime Line Catfish Co.
Farm Fresh Catfish Co.	Saul's Fish Processors
Fish Breeders of Idaho	Seabrook Seafood, Inc.
Florida Aquaculture Processors	Simmons Farm-Raised
Franklin Catfish	Southern Farm Fish Processors
Freshwater Farms, Inc.	Southern Pride
Guidry Catfish Processors, Inc.	Southfresh Farms

The next "Catfish Processing" report will be released at 3:00 p.m. ET on April 22, 1993

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