Catfish Processing

National Agricultural Statistics Service

United States Department of Agriculture

Washington, D.C.

Released June 22, 1993, by the Agricultural Statistics Board. Estimates refer to May 1992 and 1993.

Catfish Processing Down 5 Percent

Farm-raised catfish processed during May totaled 37.0 million pounds round weight, down 5 percent from May 1992. The January through May 1993 cumulative total of round weight processed, at 201 million pounds, was up fractionally from the same period the previous year.

Net pounds of processed fish sold during May totaled 19.2 million pounds, a decrease of 1 percent from the comparable month in 1992. Sales of fresh fish, at 7.52 million pounds, represented 39 percent of total sales and were down 1 percent from May 1992. Frozen fish sales, at 11.7 million pounds, accounted for the remaining 61 percent of total sales and were down 1 percent from the same month a year ago. Sales of whole fish represented 27 percent of the total, fillets accounted for 54 percent, and the remaining 19 percent were mostly steaks, nuggets, and value added products.

The May 1993 average price received by processors for total fresh fish was $2.08 per pound, compared with $1.93 last year. Prices for fresh whole fish increased 14 cents per pound to $1.54, and prices for fresh fillets increased 10 cents to $2.65 per pound. Total frozen fish averaged $2.33 per pound, compared with $2.17 per pound in May 1992. Prices for frozen whole fish increased 4 cents per pound to $1.71 and frozen fillets increased 11 cents per pound to $2.62 per pound.

Freshwater catfish imports during April 1993 totaled 328 thousand pounds, up 41 percent from the 233 thousand pounds imported the previous year. Eighty-nine percent of the imports were from Brazil and 11 percent were from Thailand. There were no exports reported for the month of April. Import and export data were compiled by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

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

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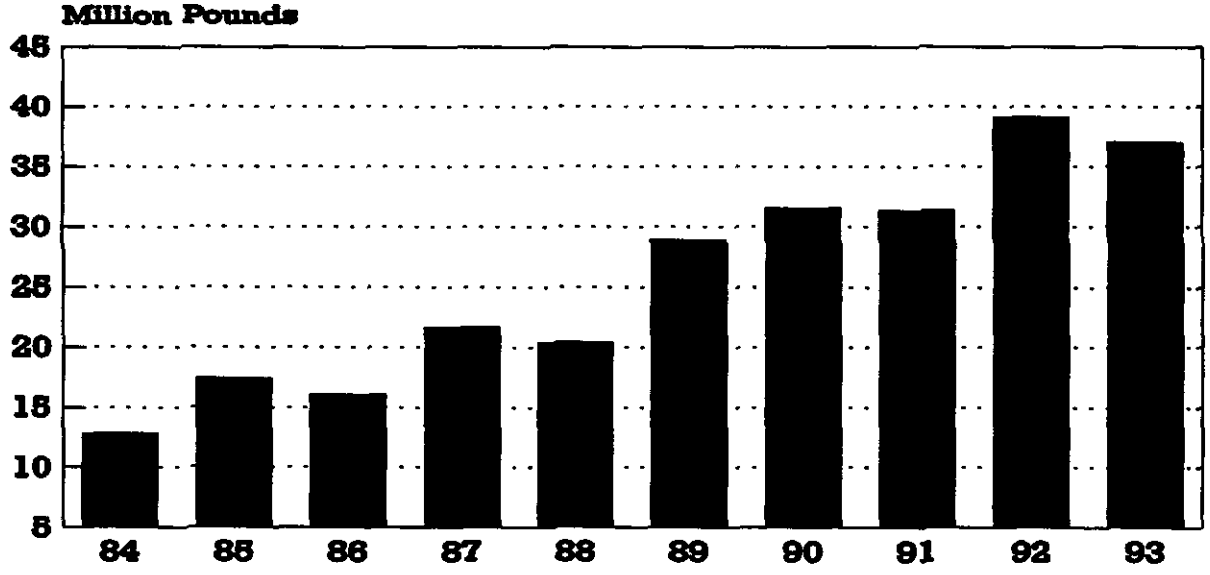
Farm-Raised Catfish: Quantity Processed and Prices Paid to Producers by Major Processors, and United States Imports, 1992-93

Month	Round Weight Processed: Monthly 1992	Monthly 1993	Cumulative 1992	Cumulative 1993	Average Price Paid to Producers 1/ 1992	1993	Imports of Catfish 2/ 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	183
Mar	45,048	43,521	120,476	124,125	.60	.70	243	127
Apr	41,177	39,920	161,653	164,045	.63	.71	233	328
May	39,111	37,030	200,764	201,075	.63	.72	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 - May
United States, 1984-93
Round Weight



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

Item	Sales Volume 1992	Sales Volume 1993	Average Price 1992	Average Price 1993	Ending Inventory 1992	Ending Inventory 1993
	1,000 Pounds		Dollars Per Pound		1,000 Pounds	
Fresh						
Whole Fish						
Round & Gutted Only	783	672	0.86	1.00	1/	1/
Whole Dressed	2,848	2,727	1.53	1.66	1/	1/
Total	3,631	3,399	1.40	1.54	382	296
Other						
Steaks	175	137	1.77	1.82	6	1/
Other 2/	614	624	1.94	1.94	82	1/
Total	*789*	*761*	*1.90*	*1.92*	*88*	*108*
Fillets 3/	3,203	3,362	2.55	2.65	462	376
Total Fresh	7,623	7,522	1.93	2.08	932	780
Frozen						
Whole Fish						
Round & Gutted Only						
Whole Dressed	3,173	1,831	1.67	1.71	2,641	1,203
Total	3,173	1,831	1.67	1.71	2,641	1,203
Other						
Steaks	159	132	1.59	1.72	95	187
Other 2/	2,519	2,781	2.01	2.04	2,537	3,538
Total	2,678	2,913	1.98	2.03	2,632	3,725
Fillets 3/	5,980	6,945	2.51	2.62	4,033	4,842
Total Frozen	11,831	11,689	2.17	2.33	9,306	9,770
Total Fresh & Frozen	19,454	19,211	2.08	2.23	10,238	10,550

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:

Fillets - 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 fillets cut from below the rib section of the fish. Usually includes breading or added ingredients.

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

* Estimated

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