



# Catfish Production

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## **Water Surface Acres Down 3 Percent**

The water surface area to be used for catfish production in the three major producing States (Alabama, Arkansas, and Mississippi) during July 1 through December 31, 2023, totaled 50,300 acres, down 3 percent from a year ago. Acres used for Foodsize fish totaled 41,200, up 1 percent from the same time period in 2022. Acres used for Fingerling production at 6,260 acres, are down 6 percent, and acres for Broodfish at 2,050 acres, are up 12 percent. Of the total acres in production, 1,455 acres were scheduled to be renovated from July 1 to December 31, 2023 compared with 455 acres taken out of production during the period of January 1 through June 30, 2023.

## **Foodsize Inventory Down 6 Percent**

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 109 million Foodsize fish on hand on July 1, 2023, down 6 percent from July 1, 2022. The breakouts of Foodsize fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2023, with their respective percent change from the previous year were: Large foodsize at 3.55 million fish, up 15 percent; Medium foodsize at 38.0 million fish, down 3 percent; and Small foodsize at 67.8 million fish, down 8 percent. The three major Catfish producing States also had 885,000 Broodfish on hand on July 1, 2023, up 22 percent from last year's 725,000 Broodfish.

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 252 million Stockers on hand on July 1, 2023, down 15 percent from the July 1, 2022 total of 296 million Stockers. The breakouts of Stocker fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2023, with their respective change from the previous year were: Large stockers at 114 million fish, down 5 percent from the previous year and Small stockers at 138 million fish, down 21 percent from last year. Producers had 265 million Fingerlings and fry on hand on July 1, 2023, down 11 percent from July 1, 2022.

## Water Surface Acres Used for Production - Major States: 2022 and 2023

State	Water surface acres used for production July 1 - December 31	
	2022	2023
	(acres)	(acres)
Alabama .....	14,900	14,000
Arkansas .....	3,600	3,400
Mississippi .....	33,300	32,900
3 State total .....	51,800	50,300

## Catfish Water Surface Acres by Use – Major States: 2022 and 2023

Year and State	Acres intended for utilization during July 1 - December 31 for					Acres taken out of production during January 1 - June 30
	Foodsize	Fingerlings	Broodfish	Currently under or scheduled for		
				Renovation	New construction	
	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)
<b>2022</b>						
Alabama .....	14,400	(D)	20	(D)	125	(D)
Arkansas .....	2,300	(D)	110	(D)	-	-
Mississippi .....	24,200	5,500	1,700	1,500	380	(D)
3 State total .....	40,900	6,650	1,830	2,005	505	1,190
<b>2023</b>						
Alabama .....	13,900	(D)	(D)	300	(D)	(D)
Arkansas .....	2,200	(D)	(D)	55	-	-
Mississippi .....	25,100	5,000	1,800	1,100	(D)	(D)
3 State total .....	41,200	6,260	2,050	1,455	255	455

- Represents zero.

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

## Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2022 and 2023

Size category and State	Fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(pounds per fish)	(pounds per fish)
<b>Large foodsize</b>						
Alabama .....	1,240	1,520	4,900	5,800	4.0	3.8
Arkansas .....	185	300	653	1,090	3.5	3.6
Mississippi .....	1,650	1,730	5,600	6,100	3.4	3.5
3 State total .....	3,075	3,550	11,153	12,990	3.6	3.7
<b>Medium foodsize</b>						
Alabama .....	10,600	9,190	21,300	18,000	2.0	2.0
Arkansas .....	1,920	1,900	3,700	3,550	1.9	1.9
Mississippi .....	26,700	26,900	47,200	53,000	1.8	2.0
3 State total .....	39,220	37,990	72,200	74,550	1.8	2.0
<b>Small foodsize</b>						
Alabama .....	29,100	22,800	29,400	20,800	1.0	0.9
Arkansas .....	3,360	3,420	3,400	3,450	1.0	1.0
Mississippi .....	41,000	41,600	40,800	46,800	1.0	1.1
3 State total .....	73,460	67,820	73,600	71,050	1.0	1.0
<b>Total foodsize</b>						
Alabama .....	40,940	33,510	55,600	44,600	(X)	(X)
Arkansas .....	5,465	5,620	7,753	8,090	(X)	(X)
Mississippi .....	69,350	70,230	93,600	105,900	(X)	(X)
3 State total .....	115,755	109,360	156,953	158,590	(X)	(X)
<b>Broodfish</b>						
Alabama .....	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas .....	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi .....	690	830	3,350	4,850	4.9	5.8
3 State total .....	725	885	3,504	5,093	4.8	5.8

See footnote(s) at end of table.

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**Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2022 and 2023 (continued)**

Size category and State	Fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(pounds per 1,000 fish)	(pounds per 1,000 fish)
<b>Large stockers</b>						
Alabama .....	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas .....	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi .....	60,700	62,700	23,700	23,200	390	370
3 State total .....	120,220	113,880	45,400	42,600	378	374
<b>Small stockers</b>						
Alabama .....	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas .....	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi .....	110,000	103,000	11,400	9,100	104.0	88.3
3 State total .....	175,480	137,870	18,613	13,057	106.0	94.7
<b>Total stockers</b>						
Alabama .....	113,300	71,600	25,400	18,150	(X)	(X)
Arkansas .....	11,700	14,450	3,513	5,207	(X)	(X)
Mississippi .....	170,700	165,700	35,100	32,300	(X)	(X)
3 State total .....	295,700	251,750	64,013	55,657	(X)	(X)
<b>Fingerlings and fry</b>						
Alabama .....	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas .....	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi .....	244,000	209,000	6,100	5,450	25.0	26.1
3 State total .....	296,950	265,390	7,373	6,831	24.8	25.7

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

(X) Not applicable.

## Terms and Definitions Used for Catfish Production Estimates

**Broodfish:** Fish kept for egg production, including males. Broodfish produce the fertilized eggs, which go to hatcheries. The most desirable size is 3 to 10 pounds or 4 to 6 years of age.

**Fingerlings:** Fish weighing 2 to 60 pounds per 1,000 fish or 2 to 6 inches in length.

**Foodsize (large):** Fish weighing over 3 pounds.

**Foodsize (medium):** Fish weighing over one and one-half pounds to 3 pounds.

**Foodsize (small):** Fish weighing over three-fourths of a pound to one and one-half pounds.

**Fry:** Fish weighing less than 2 pounds per 1,000 fish or less than 2 inches in length.

**Stockers (large):** Fish weighing over 180 pounds to 750 pounds per 1,000 fish.

**Stockers (small):** Fish weighing over 60 pounds to 180 pounds per 1,000 fish or over 6 inches in length.

## Statistical Methodology

**Survey Procedures:** All known catfish producers in the three published States are surveyed to collect production data. Individual NASS regional field offices maintain a list of all known catfish producers and use known sources of producers to update their lists. Operators are mailed a questionnaire as close as possible to July 1 and given time to respond by mail. Those that do not respond by mail are telephoned or possibly enumerated in person during the middle of July.

**Estimating Procedures:** Sound statistical methodology is employed to derive the estimates from reported data. All data are analyzed for unusual values. Data from each operation are compared to their own past operating profile and to trends from similar operations. Missing data for large operations are estimated based on similar operations or historical data. Summary expansions account for the remaining non-response operations. NASS regional field offices prepare these estimates by using a combination of survey indications and historic trends. Individual State estimates are reviewed by the Agricultural Statistics Board for reasonableness.

**Revision policy:** Estimates for the previous year are subject to revision when current estimates are made. Revisions are the result of late or corrected data. Due to sequestration, NASS did not produce July catfish production estimates in 2013.

**Reliability:** In the three published States, catfish production estimates are based on a census of all known active producers and therefore, have no sampling variability. However, estimates are subject to errors such as omissions, duplication, and mistakes in reporting, recording, and processing the data. While these errors cannot be measured directly, they are minimized through strict quality controls in the data collection process and a careful review of all reported data for consistency and reasonableness.

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

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- Cornell’s Mann Library has launched a new website housing NASS’s and other agency’s archived reports. The new website, <https://usda.library.cornell.edu>. All email subscriptions containing reports will be sent from the new website, <https://usda.library.cornell.edu>. To continue receiving the reports via e-mail, you will have to go to the new website, create a new account and re-subscribe to the reports. If you need instructions to set up an account or subscribe, they are located at: <https://usda.library.cornell.edu/help>. You should whitelist [notifications@usda-esmis.library.cornell.edu](mailto:notifications@usda-esmis.library.cornell.edu) in your email client to avoid the emails going into spam/junk folders.

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

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