



Catfish Production

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Water Surface Acres Down 8 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, 2025, totaled 42,300 acres, down 8 percent from a year ago. Acres used for Foodsize fish totaled 34,100, down 9 percent from the same time period in 2024. Acres used for Fingerling production at 4,965 acres, are down 9 percent, and acres for Broodfish at 1,770 acres, are up 4 percent. Of the total acres in production, 1,105 acres were scheduled to be renovated from July 1 to December 31, 2025 compared with 1,825 acres taken out of production during the period of January 1 through June 30, 2025.

Foodsize Inventory Down 14 Percent

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 93.5 million Foodsize fish on hand on July 1, 2025, down 14 percent from July 1, 2024. The breakouts of Foodsize fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2025, with their respective percent change from the previous year were: Large foodsize at 2.51 million fish, down 21 percent; Medium foodsize at 24.0 million fish, down 39 percent; and Small foodsize at 67.0 million fish, up slightly. The three major Catfish producing States also had 775,000 Broodfish on hand on July 1, 2025, down 31 percent from last year's 1.12 million Broodfish.

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 183 million Stockers on hand on July 1, 2025, down 1 percent from the July 1, 2024 total of 184 million Stockers. The breakouts of Stocker fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2025, with their respective change from the previous year were: Large stockers at 84.8 million fish, down 4 percent from the previous year and Small stockers at 97.8 million fish, up 2 percent from last year. Producers had 243 million Fingerlings and fry on hand on July 1, 2025, down 28 percent from July 1, 2024.

Water Surface Acres Used for Production - Major States: 2024 and 2025

State	Water surface acres used for production July 1 - December 31	
	2024	2025
	(acres)	(acres)
Alabama	12,800	10,500
Arkansas	3,400	3,700
Mississippi	29,900	28,100
3 State total	46,100	42,300

Catfish Water Surface Acres by Use – Major States: 2024 and 2025

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)
2024						
Alabama	12,300	310	(D)	115	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	2,300	650	(D)	85	-	(D)
Mississippi	23,000	4,500	1,500	1,000	(D)	1,800
3 State total	37,600	5,460	1,710	1,200	240	2,870
2025						
Alabama	10,300	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	2,400	(D)	(D)	(D)	-	(D)
Mississippi	21,400	4,200	1,500	890	(D)	490
3 State total	34,100	4,965	1,770	1,105	35	1,825

- Represents zero.

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

Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2024 and 2025

Size category and State	Fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(pounds per fish)	(pounds per fish)
Large foodsize						
Alabama	1,260	770	4,900	2,900	3.9	3.8
Arkansas	370	420	1,400	1,500	3.8	3.6
Mississippi	1,530	1,320	5,400	4,750	3.5	3.6
3 State total	3,160	2,510	11,700	9,150	3.7	3.6
Medium foodsize						
Alabama	10,300	5,470	20,900	10,200	2.0	1.9
Arkansas	2,350	2,570	4,700	5,300	2.0	2.1
Mississippi	26,600	16,000	51,900	29,500	2.0	1.8
3 State total	39,250	24,040	77,500	45,000	2.0	1.9
Small foodsize						
Alabama	20,600	15,700	19,700	14,200	1.0	0.9
Arkansas	5,300	5,150	5,300	5,150	1.0	1.0
Mississippi	40,900	46,100	40,900	44,700	1.0	1.0
3 State total	66,800	66,950	65,900	64,050	1.0	1.0
Total foodsize						
Alabama	32,160	21,940	45,500	27,300	(X)	(X)
Arkansas	8,020	8,140	11,400	11,950	(X)	(X)
Mississippi	69,030	63,420	98,200	78,950	(X)	(X)
3 State total	109,210	93,500	155,100	118,200	(X)	(X)
Broodfish						
Alabama	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi	1,030	700	4,500	4,250	4.4	6.1
3 State total	1,120	775	4,916	4,525	4.4	5.8

See footnote(s) at end of table.

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Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2024 and 2025 (continued)

Size category and State	Fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(pounds per 1,000 fish)	(pounds per 1,000 fish)
Large stockers						
Alabama	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi	57,900	50,200	23,500	22,900	406	456
3 State total	88,550	84,800	37,000	36,600	418	432
Small stockers						
Alabama	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi	62,900	53,500	6,400	6,650	102	124
3 State total	95,460	97,840	10,410	11,790	109	121
Total stockers						
Alabama	48,500	61,500	12,650	13,750	(X)	(X)
Arkansas	14,710	17,440	4,860	5,090	(X)	(X)
Mississippi	120,800	103,700	29,900	29,550	(X)	(X)
3 State total	184,010	182,640	47,410	48,390	(X)	(X)
Fingerlings and fry						
Alabama	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi	280,000	183,000	6,200	2,300	22.1	12.6
3 State total	337,110	242,930	7,525	3,208	22.3	13.2

(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.

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.

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Tiffany Byrne – Dairy Products.....	(651) 440-7789
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Derron Martin – Catfish, Census of Aquaculture, Egg Products, Mink, Trout	(202) 690-3237
Ralph Mondesir – Hogs and Pigs	(202) 720-3106
Suzanne Richards – Cost of Pollination, Honey, Honey Bee Colonies, Sheep and Goats	(202) 720-4448
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Takiyah Walker – Broiler Hatchery, Chicken Hatchery.....	(202) 720-6147

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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.

If you have specific questions you would like an expert to respond to, please visit our “Ask A Specialist” website at www.nass.usda.gov/Contact_Us/Ask_a_Specialist.

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