



Catfish Production

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Foodfish Inventory Numbers Down 25 Percent from a Year Ago

Catfish operations in the three major producing States (Alabama, Arkansas, and Mississippi) had 159 million foodsize fish on hand on July 1, 2011, down 25 percent from the July 1, 2010 total of 212 million foodsize fish. The breakouts of foodsize fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2011, with their respective percent change from the previous year were: large foodsize, 2.57 million fish, down 60 percent; medium foodsize, 33.8 million fish, down 45 percent; and small foodsize, 122 million fish, down 15 percent.

The three major States also had 430 thousand broodfish on hand on July 1, 2011, down 5 percent from last year's 455 thousand broodfish.

The number of large stockers on hand on July 1, 2011, totaled 176 million fish, up 6 percent from the 166 million fish on hand a year ago. There were 173 million small stockers, up 2 percent from last year. Producers had 732 million fingerlings and fry on hand on July 1, 2011.

The water surface area to be used for catfish production during July 1 through December 31, 2011, totaled 81.4 thousand acres, down 14 percent from a year ago. Acres used for foodsize fish totaled 65.5 thousand acres, down 17 percent from the same time period in 2010. Acres for broodfish decreased 13 percent to 1.60 thousand acres, and acres used for fingerling production decreased 8 percent to 11.5 thousand acres. Acres taken out of production during the January 1, 2011 through June 30, 2011 period totaled 4.54 thousand acres, while 2.23 thousand acres of the total in production were scheduled to be renovated from July 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011. The number of operations on July 1, 2011 in the three major States totaled 389, down 14 percent from last year's total of 454 operations.

Number of Catfish Operations and Water Surface Acres Used for Production – Major States: 2010 and 2011

State	Number of operations on July 1 ¹		Water surface acres used for production July 1 - December 31	
	2010	2011	2010	2011
	(number)	(number)	(acres)	(acres)
Alabama	(NA)	(NA)	20,600	19,000
Arkansas	(NA)	(NA)	14,600	10,700
Mississippi	(NA)	(NA)	59,800	51,700
Three State total	454	389	95,000	81,400

(NA) Not available.

¹ State level number of operations will only be published every five years in conjunction with the Census of Agriculture.

Catfish Water Surface Acres by Use – Major States: 2010 and 2011

State and year	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)
2010						
Alabama	19,500	860	110	(D)	(D)	280
Arkansas	11,700	2,300	330	(D)	(D)	3,300
Mississippi	47,300	9,300	1,400	930	-	3,000
Three State total	78,500	12,460	1,840	1,580	45	6,580
2011						
Alabama	18,300	560	75	160	(D)	340
Arkansas	8,200	2,100	220	170	(D)	1,500
Mississippi	39,000	8,800	1,300	1,900	(D)	2,700
Three State total	65,500	11,460	1,595	2,230	190	4,540

- Represents zero.

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

Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2010 and 2011

Size category and State	Number of fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(pounds per fish)	(pounds per fish)
Large foodsize						
Alabama	2,190	1,080	8,000	4,000	3.7	3.7
Arkansas	400	260	1,300	912	3.3	3.5
Mississippi	3,760	1,230	13,000	4,600	3.5	3.7
Three State total	6,350	2,570	22,300	9,512	3.5	3.7
Medium foodsize						
Alabama	27,200	15,900	52,200	29,600	1.9	1.9
Arkansas	8,470	4,900	15,900	9,400	1.9	1.9
Mississippi	25,400	13,000	47,200	22,500	1.9	1.7
Three State total	61,070	33,800	115,300	61,500	1.9	1.8
Small foodsize						
Alabama	38,000	53,700	37,200	51,500	1.0	1.0
Arkansas	18,800	9,200	17,700	8,750	0.9	1.0
Mississippi	87,500	59,500	86,300	58,300	1.0	1.0
Three State total	144,300	122,400	141,200	118,550	1.0	1.0
All foodsize						
Alabama	67,390	70,680	97,400	85,100	(X)	(X)
Arkansas	27,670	14,360	34,900	19,062	(X)	(X)
Mississippi	116,660	73,730	146,500	85,400	(X)	(X)
Three State total	211,720	158,770	278,800	189,562	(X)	(X)
Broodfish						
Alabama	20	40	99	144	5.0	3.6
Arkansas	65	50	264	200	4.1	4.0
Mississippi	370	340	1,750	1,650	4.7	4.9
Three State total	455	430	2,113	1,994	4.6	4.6

See footnote(s) at end of table.

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Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2010 and 2011 (continued)

Size category and State	Number of fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(pounds per 1,000 fish)	(pounds per 1,000 fish)
Large stockers						
Alabama	38,400	45,000	14,200	17,400	370	387
Arkansas	14,700	13,400	6,150	5,750	418	429
Mississippi	113,000	118,000	45,000	47,600	398	403
Three State total	166,100	176,400	65,350	70,750	393	401
Small stockers						
Alabama	41,100	44,200	3,900	5,200	94.9	118.0
Arkansas	13,900	32,000	1,540	3,050	111.0	95.3
Mississippi	114,000	96,600	10,800	9,500	94.7	98.3
Three State total	169,000	172,800	16,240	17,750	96.1	102.7
Total stockers						
Alabama	79,500	89,200	18,100	22,600	(X)	(X)
Arkansas	28,600	45,400	7,690	8,800	(X)	(X)
Mississippi	227,000	214,600	55,800	57,100	(X)	(X)
Three State total	335,100	349,200	81,590	88,500	(X)	(X)
Fingerlings and fry						
Alabama	40,200	47,900	1,200	784	29.9	16.4
Arkansas	104,000	99,700	1,700	2,100	16.3	21.1
Mississippi	661,000	584,000	8,000	8,550	12.1	14.6
Three State total	805,200	731,600	10,900	11,434	13.5	15.6

(X) Not applicable.

Statistical Methodology

Survey Procedures: All known catfish producers in the three published states are surveyed to collect production data. Individual NASS 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 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.

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.

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

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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@nass.usda.gov.

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