



# Catfish Production

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## Water Surface Acres up 4 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, 2018, totaled 56.2 thousand acres, up 4 percent from a year ago. Acres used for foodsize fish totaled 44.6 thousand acres, up 1 percent from the same time period in 2017. Acres used for fingerling production are up 6 percent to 7.41 thousand acres, and acres for broodfish are down 1 percent to 1.74 thousand acres. Of the total acres in production, 3.18 thousand were scheduled to be renovated from July 1, 2018, to December 31, 2018, while acres taken out of production during the January 1, 2018, through June 30, 2018, period totaled 455 acres.

## Foodsize Inventory up 1 Percent

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 104 million foodsize fish on hand on July 1, 2018, up 1 percent from July 1, 2017. The breakouts of foodsize fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2018, with their respective percent change from the previous year were: large foodsize, 2.86 million fish, up 19 percent; medium foodsize, 31.4 million fish, up 11 percent; and small foodsize, 70.1 million fish, down 4 percent. The three major States also had 545 thousand broodfish on hand on July 1, 2018, up 22 percent from last year's 445 thousand broodfish.

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 322 million stockers on hand on July 1, 2018, up 10 percent from the July 1, 2017, total of 293 million stockers. The breakouts of stocker fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2018, with their respective change from the previous year were: large stockers, 181 million fish, up 29 percent; and small stockers, 141 million, down 8 percent from last year. Producers had 540 million fingerlings and fry on hand on July 1, 2018, up 1 percent from July 1, 2017.

## Water Surface Acres Used for Production – Major States: 2017 and 2018

State	Water surface acres used for production July 1 - December 31	
	2017 (acres)	2018 (acres)
Alabama .....	14,600	15,100
Arkansas .....	4,900	4,700
Mississippi .....	34,700	36,400
Three State total .....	54,200	56,200

## Catfish Water Surface Acres by Use – Major States: 2017 and 2018

State and year	Acres intended for utilization during July 1 - December 31 for					Acres taken out of production during January 1 - June 30 (acres)
	Foodsize (acres)	Fingerlings (acres)	Broodfish (acres)	Currently under or scheduled for		
				Renovation (acres)	New construction (acres)	
<b>2017</b>						
Alabama .....	14,300	75	45	260	320	620
Arkansas .....	3,300	1,300	220	270	100	270
Mississippi .....	26,500	5,600	1,500	1,300	740	45
Three State total .....	44,100	6,975	1,765	1,830	1,160	935
<b>2018</b>						
Alabama .....	14,600	210	45	340	(D)	(D)
Arkansas .....	3,000	1,200	195	340	(D)	(D)
Mississippi .....	27,000	6,000	1,500	2,500	700	225
Three State total .....	44,600	7,410	1,740	3,180	1,160	455

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

## Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2017 and 2018

Size category and State	Number of fish		Live weight			
	2017 (1,000 fish)	2018 (1,000 fish)	Total		Average	
			2017 (1,000 pounds)	2018 (1,000 pounds)	2017 (pounds per fish)	2018 (pounds per fish)
<b>Large foodsize</b>						
Alabama .....	970	1,020	3,450	3,850	3.6	3.8
Arkansas .....	290	400	1,000	1,370	3.4	3.4
Mississippi .....	1,140	1,440	3,850	5,300	3.4	3.7
Three State total .....	2,400	2,860	8,300	10,520	3.5	3.7
<b>Medium foodsize</b>						
Alabama .....	10,900	11,400	20,500	22,000	1.9	1.9
Arkansas .....	1,780	2,390	3,650	4,500	2.1	1.9
Mississippi .....	15,700	17,600	29,400	33,000	1.9	1.9
Three State total .....	28,380	31,390	53,550	59,500	1.9	1.9
<b>Small foodsize</b>						
Alabama .....	27,000	23,000	26,300	23,400	1.0	1.0
Arkansas .....	6,340	3,890	5,950	3,800	0.9	1.0
Mississippi .....	39,400	43,200	38,700	41,100	1.0	1.0
Three State total .....	72,740	70,090	70,950	68,300	1.0	1.0
<b>All foodsize</b>						
Alabama .....	38,870	35,420	50,250	49,250	(X)	(X)
Arkansas .....	8,410	6,680	10,600	9,670	(X)	(X)
Mississippi .....	56,240	62,240	71,950	79,400	(X)	(X)
Three State total .....	103,520	104,340	132,800	138,320	(X)	(X)
<b>Broodfish</b>						
Alabama .....	10	10	44	45	4.4	4.5
Arkansas .....	45	45	164	197	3.6	4.4
Mississippi .....	390	490	2,050	2,350	5.3	4.8
Three State total .....	445	545	2,258	2,592	5.1	4.8

See footnote(s) at end of table.

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**Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2017 and 2018 (continued)**

Size category and State	Number of fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2017 (1,000 fish)	2018 (1,000 fish)	2017 (1,000 pounds)	2018 (1,000 pounds)	2017 (pounds per 1,000 fish)	2018 (pounds per 1,000 fish)
<b>Large stockers</b>						
Alabama .....	47,500	52,400	14,300	17,600	301	336
Arkansas .....	11,300	12,700	3,300	3,400	292	268
Mississippi .....	81,300	116,000	31,100	36,600	383	316
Three State total .....	140,100	181,100	48,700	57,600	348	318
<b>Small stockers</b>						
Alabama .....	43,000	36,800	3,500	3,550	81	96
Arkansas .....	8,060	15,400	680	1,520	84	98
Mississippi .....	102,000	88,600	12,000	9,150	118	103
Three State total .....	153,060	140,800	16,180	14,220	106	101
<b>Total stockers</b>						
Alabama .....	90,500	89,200	17,800	21,150	(X)	(X)
Arkansas .....	19,360	28,100	3,980	4,920	(X)	(X)
Mississippi .....	183,300	204,600	43,100	45,750	(X)	(X)
Three State total .....	293,160	321,900	64,880	71,820	(X)	(X)
<b>Fingerlings and fry</b>						
Alabama .....	11,700	12,500	270	295	23.1	23.6
Arkansas .....	69,500	66,700	1,100	1,070	15.8	16.0
Mississippi .....	454,000	461,000	4,150	8,150	9.1	17.7
Three State total .....	535,200	540,200	5,520	9,515	10.3	17.6

(X) Not applicable.

## Statistical Methodology

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

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

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