

# Catfish Losses to Wildlife

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## Catfish Losses to Wildlife in 2003 Reported by 69 Percent of All Operations

A survey of producers in the 13 largest catfish producing States revealed that 69 percent reported some wildlife-caused losses in 2003, the same percentage as when the survey was conducted in 1996. The lowest rate of reported losses was in the Southeast, where 56 percent reported wildlife losses, compared with 46 percent in 1996. The highest rate of loss was reported in Arkansas, at 79 percent, compared with 74 percent in 1996.

The average cost of wildlife-caused loss for all States was \$17,200 per operation reporting a loss, while the average expense to prevent loss was \$9,200. Birds were reported as being the most common cause of loss, with great blue herons reported by 64 percent of the growers reporting loss. Other cormorants were reported by 45 percent and double crested cormorants by 41 percent. Muskrats, reported by 29 percent of the growers reporting loss, were the most frequently cited mammal, primarily for damaging dikes and roads. Of those producers reporting wildlife-caused losses, the primary types of damage were wildlife eating catfish reported by 96 percent of the growers, 66 reported injury to catfish, 38 percent reported feeding patterns interrupted, and 27 percent reported levee or road damage.

This Wildlife Damage Survey was funded by USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services.

State and Region	No. of Operations Jan. 1 2004 <sup>1</sup>	Water Surface Acres During Jan 1-Jun 30, 2004 <sup>1</sup>	Total 2003 Sales <sup>1</sup>	Percentage w/Wildlife-Caused Loss 2003	Avg. Cost of Wildlife-Caused Loss 2003 <sup>2</sup>	Average Expense to Prevent Loss 2003 <sup>3</sup>
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>\$1,000</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>
AL	200	25,400	85,159	74	9,800	5,400
AR	161	34,000	59,047	79	22,400	14,300
MS	410	101,000	243,176	69	19,600	8,800
S. E. <sup>4</sup>	193	4,250	10,200	56	5,800	1,700
West <sup>5</sup>	69	3,490	9,488	70	19,000	17,700
S. W. <sup>6</sup>	84	9,650	17,855	60	26,500	11,000
Average per Farm	NA	NA	NA	69	17,200	9,200
Total	1,117	177,790	424,925	NA	13,300,000	7,100,000

<sup>1</sup> Source: USDA, NASS, Catfish Production, February 5, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Average of operations reporting wildlife caused losses. May not calculate due to rounding procedures and non-response calculations.

<sup>3</sup> Average of those operations reporting expenses to prevent wildlife caused losses. May not calculate due to rounding and non-response calculations.

<sup>4</sup> Includes FL, GA, KY, NC, and SC.

<sup>5</sup> Includes CA, IL, and MO.

<sup>6</sup> Includes LA and TX.

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