



Catfish Production

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Water Surface Acres Down 4 Percent from Last Year

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, 2016, totaled 54.7 thousand acres, down 4 percent from a year ago. Acres used for foodsize fish totaled 43.5 thousand acres, down 3 percent from the same time period in 2015. Acres used for fingerling production are down 6 percent to 7.68 thousand acres, and acres for broodfish are down 4 percent to 1.58 thousand acres. Of the total acres in production, 2.17 thousand were scheduled to be renovated from July 1, 2016, to December 31, 2016, while acres taken out of production during the January 1, 2016, through June 30, 2016, period totaled 2.10 thousand acres.

Foodsize Inventory Numbers Down 13 Percent from a Year Ago

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 88.5 million foodsize fish on hand on July 1, 2016, down 13 percent from the July 1, 2015, total of 101 million foodsize fish. The breakouts of foodsize fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2016, with their respective percent change from the previous year were: large foodsize, 1.71 million fish, down 14 percent; medium foodsize, 20.9 million fish, down 24 percent; and small foodsize, 65.8 million fish, down 8 percent. The three major States also had 420 thousand broodfish on hand on July 1, 2016, down 3 percent from last year's 435 thousand broodfish.

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 290 million stockers on hand on July 1, 2016, up 13 percent from the July 1, 2015, total of 257 million stockers. The breakouts of stocker fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2016, with their respective change from the previous year were: large stockers, 162 million fish, up 22 percent; and small stockers, 128 million, up 4 percent from last year. Producers had 459 million fingerlings and fry on hand on July 1, 2016.

Water Surface Acres Used for Production – Major States: 2015 and 2016

State	Water surface acres used for production July 1 - December 31	
	2015 (acres)	2016 (acres)
Alabama	15,100	14,800
Arkansas	4,800	4,900
Mississippi	37,000	35,000
Three State total	56,900	54,700

(X) Not applicable.

Catfish Water Surface Acres by Use – Major States: 2015 and 2016

State and year	Acres intended for utilization during July 1 - December 31 for					Acres taken out of production during January 1 - June 30
	Foodsize (acres)	Fingerlings (acres)	Broodfish (acres)	Currently under or scheduled for		
				Renovation (acres)	New construction (acres)	
2015						
Alabama	14,600	380	55	(D)	(D)	200
Arkansas	3,400	1,200	180	(D)	-	570
Mississippi	26,800	6,600	1,400	2,700	(D)	1,500
Three State total	44,800	8,180	1,635	2,930	25	2,270
2016						
Alabama	14,500	75	45	290	(D)	660
Arkansas	3,300	1,300	230	180	-	35
Mississippi	25,700	6,300	1,300	1,700	(D)	1,400
Three State total	43,500	7,675	1,575	2,170	430	2,095

- Represents zero.

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

Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2015 and 2016

Size category and State	Number of fish		Live weight			
	2015 (1,000)	2016 (1,000)	Total		Average	
			2015 (1,000 pounds)	2016 (1,000 pounds)	2015 (pounds per fish)	2016 (pounds per fish)
Large foodsize						
Alabama	940	870	3,500	3,000	3.7	3.4
Arkansas	190	195	675	645	3.6	3.3
Mississippi	850	640	3,000	2,300	3.5	3.6
Three State total	1,980	1,705	7,175	5,945	3.6	3.5
Medium foodsize						
Alabama	9,750	9,690	19,100	18,700	2.0	1.9
Arkansas	1,960	1,600	3,500	2,900	1.8	1.8
Mississippi	16,000	9,650	29,700	17,500	1.9	1.8
Three State total	27,710	20,940	52,300	39,100	1.9	1.9
Small foodsize						
Alabama	31,200	28,300	31,800	27,300	1.0	1.0
Arkansas	4,820	4,640	4,900	5,000	1.0	1.1
Mississippi	35,500	32,900	36,000	33,900	1.0	1.0
Three State total	71,520	65,840	72,700	66,200	1.0	1.0
All foodsize						
Alabama	41,890	38,860	54,400	49,000	(X)	(X)
Arkansas	6,970	6,435	9,075	8,545	(X)	(X)
Mississippi	52,350	43,190	68,700	53,700	(X)	(X)
Three State total	101,210	88,485	132,175	111,245	(X)	(X)
Broodfish						
Alabama	15	10	35	31	2.3	3.1
Arkansas	50	70	252	291	5.0	4.2
Mississippi	370	340	1,980	1,890	5.4	5.6
Three State total	435	420	2,267	2,212	5.2	5.3

See footnote(s) at end of table.

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Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2015 and 2016 (continued)

Size category and State	Number of fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2015 (1,000)	2016 (1,000)	2015 (1,000 pounds)	2016 (1,000 pounds)	2015 (pounds per 1,000 fish)	2016 (pounds per 1,000 fish)
Large stockers						
Alabama	43,500	45,500	15,700	16,100	361	354
Arkansas	9,290	12,500	2,900	4,750	312	380
Mississippi	80,100	104,000	32,400	37,600	404	362
Three State total	132,890	162,000	51,000	58,450	384	361
Small stockers						
Alabama	27,600	42,500	2,350	4,900	85	115
Arkansas	14,100	5,500	1,230	619	87	113
Mississippi	82,100	80,300	10,000	10,300	122	128
Three State total	123,800	128,300	13,580	15,819	110	123
Total stockers						
Alabama	71,100	88,000	18,050	21,000	(X)	(X)
Arkansas	23,390	18,000	4,130	5,369	(X)	(X)
Mississippi	162,200	184,300	42,400	47,900	(X)	(X)
Three State total	256,690	290,300	64,580	74,269	(X)	(X)
Fingerlings and fry						
Alabama	14,700	12,500	530	481	36.1	38.5
Arkansas	46,000	74,400	1,080	1,190	23.5	16.0
Mississippi	355,000	372,000	6,400	5,000	18.0	13.4
Three State total	415,700	458,900	8,010	6,671	19.3	14.5

(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

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