



# 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, 2012, totaled 78.3 thousand acres, down 4 percent from a year ago. Acres used for foodsize fish totaled 62.4 thousand acres, down 5 percent from the same time period in 2011. Acres used for fingerling production increased 5 percent to 12.0 thousand acres, and acres for broodfish increased 5 percent to 1.67 thousand acres. Of the total acres in production, 2.41 thousand were scheduled to be renovated from July 1, 2012, to December 31, 2012, while acres taken out of production during the January 1, 2012, through June 30, 2012, period totaled 2.26 thousand acres. The number of operations on July 1, 2012, in the three major States totaled 348, down 11 percent from last year's total of 389 operations.

## Foodsize Inventory Numbers Up 1 Percent from a Year Ago

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 161 million foodsize fish on hand on July 1, 2012, up 1 percent from the July 1, 2011, total of 159 million foodsize fish. The breakouts of foodsize fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2012, with their respective percent change from the previous year were: large foodsize, 4.35 million fish, up 69 percent; medium foodsize, 37.5 million fish, up 11 percent; and small foodsize, 119 million fish, down 3 percent. The three major States also had 435 thousand broodfish on hand on July 1, 2012, up 1 percent from last year's 430 thousand broodfish.

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 384 million stockers on hand on July 1, 2012, up 10 percent from the July 1, 2011, total of 349 million stockers. The breakouts of stocker fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2012, with their respective change from the previous year were: large stockers, 215 million fish, up 22 percent; and small stockers, 169 million, down 2 percent from last year. Producers had 686 million fingerlings and fry on hand on July 1, 2012.

**Number of Catfish Operations and Water Surface Acres Used for Production – Major States: 2011 and 2012**

State	Number of operations on July 1 <sup>1</sup>		Water surface acres used for production July 1 - December 31	
	2011	2012	2011	2012
	(number)	(number)	(acres)	(acres)
Alabama .....	(NA)	(NA)	19,100	18,600
Arkansas .....	(NA)	(NA)	10,700	9,000
Mississippi .....	(NA)	(NA)	51,700	50,700
Three State total .....	389	348	81,500	78,300

(NA) Not available.

<sup>1</sup> 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: 2011 and 2012**

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)
<b>2011</b>						
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
<b>2012</b>						
Alabama .....	18,100	440	60	(D)	(D)	290
Arkansas .....	7,000	1,700	210	(D)	(D)	70
Mississippi .....	37,300	9,900	1,400	2,000	-	1,900
Three State total .....	62,400	12,040	1,670	2,410	35	2,260

- Represents zero.

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

## Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2011 and 2012

Size category and State	Number of fish		Live weight			
	2011 (1,000)	2012 (1,000)	Total		Average	
			2011 (1,000 pounds)	2012 (1,000 pounds)	2011 (pounds per fish)	2012 (pounds per fish)
<b>Large foodsize</b>						
Alabama .....	1,080	1,630	4,000	5,700	3.7	3.5
Arkansas .....	260	550	912	2,000	3.5	3.6
Mississippi .....	1,230	2,170	4,600	7,700	3.7	3.5
Three State total .....	2,570	4,350	9,512	15,400	3.7	3.5
<b>Medium foodsize</b>						
Alabama .....	15,900	14,400	29,600	27,900	1.9	1.9
Arkansas .....	4,900	4,420	9,400	8,000	1.9	1.8
Mississippi .....	13,000	18,700	22,500	34,400	1.7	1.8
Three State total .....	33,800	37,520	61,500	70,300	1.8	1.9
<b>Small foodsize</b>						
Alabama .....	53,700	47,200	51,500	46,300	1.0	1.0
Arkansas .....	9,200	10,500	8,750	10,300	1.0	1.0
Mississippi .....	59,500	61,000	58,300	60,500	1.0	1.0
Three State total .....	122,400	118,700	118,550	117,100	1.0	1.0
<b>All foodsize</b>						
Alabama .....	70,680	63,230	85,100	79,900	(X)	(X)
Arkansas .....	14,360	15,470	19,062	20,300	(X)	(X)
Mississippi .....	73,730	81,870	85,400	102,600	(X)	(X)
Three State total .....	158,770	160,570	189,562	202,800	(X)	(X)
<b>Broodfish</b>						
Alabama .....	40	15	144	70	3.6	4.7
Arkansas .....	50	50	200	204	4.0	4.1
Mississippi .....	340	370	1,650	1,990	4.9	5.4
Three State total .....	430	435	1,994	2,264	4.6	5.2

See footnote(s) at end of table.

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**Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2011 and 2012 (continued)**

Size category and State	Number of fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2011 (1,000)	2012 (1,000)	2011 (1,000 pounds)	2012 (1,000 pounds)	2011 (pounds per 1,000 fish)	2012 (pounds per 1,000 fish)
<b>Large stockers</b>						
Alabama .....	45,000	42,500	17,400	16,400	387	386
Arkansas .....	13,400	12,800	5,750	4,900	429	383
Mississippi .....	118,000	160,000	47,600	57,600	403	360
Three State total .....	176,400	215,300	70,750	78,900	401	366
<b>Small stockers</b>						
Alabama .....	44,200	37,400	5,200	3,750	118.0	100.0
Arkansas .....	32,000	25,300	3,050	2,500	95.3	98.8
Mississippi .....	96,600	106,000	9,500	10,500	98.3	99.1
Three State total .....	172,800	168,700	17,750	16,750	102.7	99.3
<b>Total stockers</b>						
Alabama .....	89,200	79,900	22,600	20,150	(X)	(X)
Arkansas .....	45,400	38,100	8,800	7,400	(X)	(X)
Mississippi .....	214,600	266,000	57,100	68,100	(X)	(X)
Three State total .....	349,200	384,000	88,500	95,650	(X)	(X)
<b>Fingerlings and fry</b>						
Alabama .....	47,900	38,100	784	932	16.4	24.5
Arkansas .....	99,700	72,600	2,100	1,080	21.1	14.9
Mississippi .....	584,000	575,000	8,550	10,200	14.6	17.7
Three State total .....	731,600	685,700	11,434	12,212	15.6	17.8

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

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