



# Catfish Processing

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## Special Note

Due to sequestration, all releases of this report have been suspended through the end of the federal fiscal year on September 30, 2013. Please check the NASS website at [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov) for any future updates on NASS programs.

## Catfish Processing Up 11 Percent from Last Year

Farm-raised catfish processed during February 2013 totaled 30.0 million pounds round weight, up 11 percent from February 2012. The average price paid to producers was 82.2 cents per pound for February 2013, up 0.3 cent from last month but 40.7 cents below a year ago.

Net pounds of processed fish sold during February 2013 totaled 15.5 million pounds, up 8 percent from the comparable month in 2012. Sales of fresh fish, at 5.59 million pounds, were up 8 percent from February 2012 and represented 36 percent of total sales. Frozen fish sales, at 9.96 million pounds, were up 8 percent from a year ago and accounted for the remaining 64 percent of total fish sales. Sales of whole fish represented 20 percent of the total fish sold, fillets accounted for 60 percent, and the remaining 20 percent were mostly steaks, nuggets, and value added products. The total end of the month inventory decreased 9 percent from last month and was down 40 percent from a year ago.

The total fresh and frozen average price for February 2013 was \$2.77, down 73 cents from a year ago. The February 2013 average price received by processors for total fresh fish was \$2.67 per pound, down 75 cents from last year. Prices for fresh whole fish were \$1.83 per pound, down 61 cents from February 2012. Prices for fresh fillets were down \$1.00 from a year ago at \$3.68 per pound. Total frozen fish averaged \$2.82 per pound, down 72 cents from February 2012. Prices for frozen whole dressed fish were down 21 cents at \$2.73 and frozen fillets at \$3.15 per pound were down \$1.10 from a year ago.

Imports for consumption of *Ictalurus* spp., *Pangasius* spp., and other catfish of the order Siluriformes for January 2013 totaled 19.4 million pounds, down 24 percent from the amount imported in January 2012. Imports were from Bangladesh, Brazil, China, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. The *Ictalurus* spp. imports totaled 861 thousand pounds, which were from China and Thailand.

Fresh catfish fillet exports totaled 377 thousand pounds, with 55.8 thousand pounds going to Canada and the rest going to China, Kuwait, Mexico, the Islands of Turks and Caicos, United Arab Emirates, and Vietnam. Exports of frozen catfish fillets reported for January 2013 totaled 46.0 thousand pounds, going to Nigeria and the Islands of Turks and Caicos.

Import and export data are compiled by the United States Census Bureau.

## Farm-Raised Catfish Processed and Prices Paid to Producers by Month – United States: 2012-2013

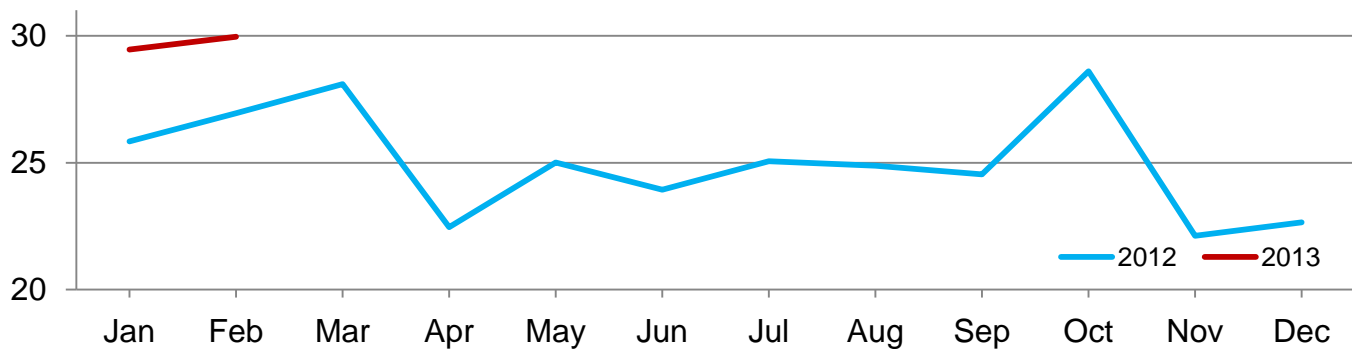
[Blank cells indicate estimation period has not yet begun]

Month	Round weight processed								
	Monthly			Cumulative			Price per pound <sup>1</sup>		
	2012	2013	2013 as percent of 2012	2012	2013	2013 as percent of 2012	2012	2013	Change from 2012
(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(dollars)	(dollars)	(dollars)	
January .....	25,843	29,458	114	25,843	29,458	114	1.248	0.819	-0.429
February .....	26,950	29,959	111	52,793	59,417	113	1.229	0.822	-0.407
March .....	28,098			80,891			1.201		
April .....	22,463			103,354			1.167		
May .....	25,009			128,363			1.038		
June .....	23,938			152,301			0.934		
July .....	25,056			177,357			0.843		
August .....	24,886			202,243			0.798		
September .....	24,535			226,778			0.793		
October .....	28,596			255,374			0.803		
November .....	22,124			277,498			0.822		
December .....	22,653			300,151			0.830		

<sup>1</sup> Quantity processed by major processors and the prices paid for fish delivered to the processing plant's door. Price includes charges for any services provided by the processing plant, such as seining and hauling. Price also includes any discounts or premiums for size or quality, but does not include adjustments based on year-end settlements.

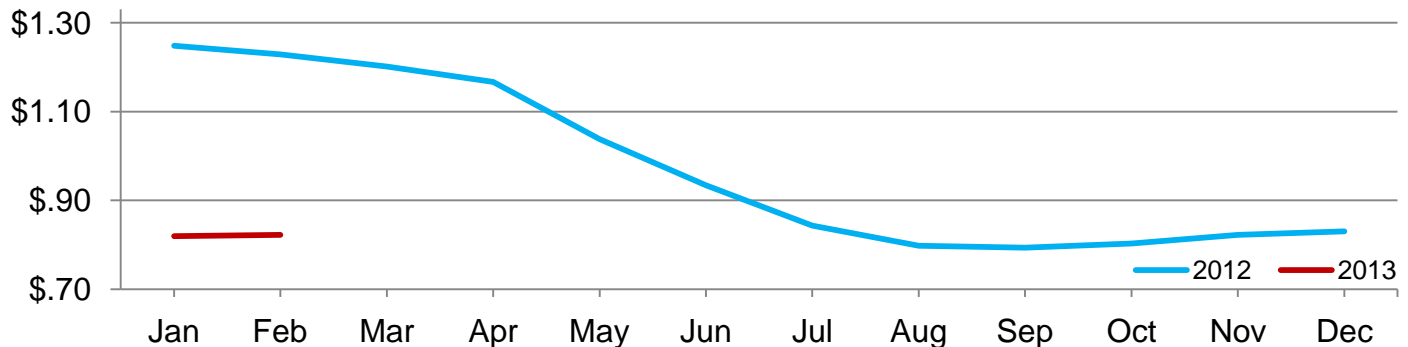
### Catfish Processed – United States

Million pounds



### Average Catfish Grower Price – United States

Price per pound



**Processed Farm-Raised Catfish Sales Volume and Average Price by Month – United States:  
2012 and 2013**

Item <sup>1</sup>	Sales volume			Average price <sup>2</sup>		
	February 2012	January 2013	February 2013	February 2012	January 2013	February 2013
	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(dollars per pound)	(dollars per pound)	(dollars per pound)
<b>Fresh fish</b>						
Whole						
Round and gutted .....	1,136	1,709	1,263	1.80	1.47	1.45
Whole dressed .....	1,187	1,150	1,217	2.94	2.19	2.13
Total .....	2,323	2,859	2,480	2.44	1.81	1.83
Other						
Steaks .....	45	79	57	3.54	2.82	2.91
Nuggets .....	446	433	488	1.82	1.54	1.53
Other .....	24	18	21	4.77	4.29	4.61
Total .....	515	530	566	2.11	1.82	1.78
Fillets .....	2,349	2,372	2,543	4.68	3.70	3.68
Total fresh .....	5,187	5,761	5,589	3.42	2.59	2.67
<b>Frozen fish</b>						
Whole dressed .....	634	574	574	2.94	2.77	2.73
Other						
Steaks .....	56	45	39	3.15	2.64	2.58
Nuggets .....	1,943	2,035	1,841	1.39	1.43	1.45
Other .....	645	882	680	4.09	3.58	3.31
Total .....	2,644	2,962	2,560	2.09	2.09	1.96
Fillets .....	5,982	6,707	6,826	4.25	3.20	3.15
Total frozen .....	9,260	10,243	9,960	3.54	2.85	2.82
<b>Fresh and frozen fish</b>						
Whole						
Round and gutted .....	1,136	1,709	1,263	1.80	1.47	1.45
Whole dressed .....	1,821	1,724	1,791	2.94	2.38	2.32
Total .....	2,957	3,433	3,054	2.54	1.97	2.00
Other						
Steaks .....	101	124	96	3.32	2.75	2.78
Nuggets .....	2,389	2,468	2,329	1.47	1.45	1.47
Other .....	669	900	701	4.11	3.59	3.35
Total .....	3,159	3,492	3,126	2.09	2.05	1.93
Fillets .....	8,331	9,079	9,369	4.37	3.33	3.29
Total fresh and frozen fish .....	14,447	16,004	15,549	3.50	2.76	2.77

<sup>1</sup> For further detail, please refer to the terms and definitions section of this report.

<sup>2</sup> Gross value FOB plant.

## Processed Farm-Raised Catfish Ending Inventory by Month – United States: 2012 and 2013

Item <sup>1</sup>	Ending inventory		
	February 2012 (1,000 pounds)	January 2013 (1,000 pounds)	February 2013 (1,000 pounds)
<b>Fresh fish</b>			
Whole			
Round and gutted .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Whole dressed .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total .....	155	204	182
Other			
Steaks .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Nuggets .....	48	72	55
Other .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total .....	56	79	60
Fillets .....	316	332	331
Total fresh .....	527	615	573
<b>Frozen fish</b>			
Whole dressed .....	372	690	693
Other			
Steaks .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Nuggets .....	1,274	647	649
Other .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total .....	1,684	1,087	1,075
Fillets .....	9,298	5,458	4,777
Total frozen .....	11,354	7,235	6,545
<b>Fresh and frozen fish</b>			
Whole			
Round and gutted .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Whole dressed .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total .....	527	894	875
Other			
Steaks .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Nuggets .....	1,322	719	704
Other .....	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total .....	1,740	1,166	1,135
Fillets .....	9,614	5,790	5,108
Total fresh and frozen fish .....	11,881	7,850	7,118

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

<sup>1</sup> For further detail, please refer to the terms and definitions section of this report.

## Catfish Imports by Month – United States: 2012-2013

[Data compiled by the United States Census Bureau. Blank data cells indicate estimation period has not yet begun]

Month	Imports					
	Ictalurus spp.			Total <sup>1</sup>		
	2012	2013	2013 as percent of 2012	2012	2013	2013 as percent of 2012
	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)
January .....	2,028	861	42	25,551	19,369	76
February .....	1,317			15,238		
March .....	528			15,280		
April .....	534			19,756		
May .....	345			20,100		
June .....	352			18,847		
July .....	73			22,604		
August .....	84			23,655		
September .....	202			22,868		
October .....	202			20,217		
November .....	331			19,220		
December .....	432			14,062		

<sup>1</sup> Includes freshwater imports for consumption of *Ictalurus* spp., *Pangasius* spp., and other catfish of the order Siluriformes.

## Catfish Exports by Month – United States: 2012-2013

[Data compiled by the United States Census Bureau. Blank data cells indicate estimation period has not yet begun]

Month	Exports					
	Fresh			Frozen		
	2012	2013	2013 as percent of 2012	2012	2013	2013 as percent of 2012
	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(percent)
January .....	85.2	377.3	443	2.7	46.0	1,704
February .....	120.2			11.1		
March .....	129.5			68.0		
April .....	234.5			29.7		
May .....	83.6			4.6		
June .....	82.7			10.9		
July .....	114.1			5.3		
August .....	95.2			5.5		
September .....	113.5			57.7		
October .....	141.2			8.5		
November .....	64.9			49.2		
December .....	79.0			22.6		

## Statistical Methodology

**Survey Procedures:** Survey data for catfish processing are collected from approximately 17 processors. All participating processors must meet the minimum criteria of having a capacity to process at least 2,000 pounds live weight of catfish per 8-hour shift. The survey is conducted entirely by National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Headquarters staff in Washington, D.C. However, NASS field offices are responsible for informing Headquarters staff of any new processing operations in their state to ensure complete survey coverage. Processors are contacted either by mail, telephone, fax or internet. Diligent effort is made to ensure that all operations are accounted for in the estimate.

**Estimating Procedures:** The *Catfish Processing* report refers strictly to farm-raised fish and excludes wild captured fish. Prior to summarization, questionnaires are compared with the previous month's reports for comparable placement of data, reasonable price levels, and a reasonable inventory carryover given the sales and processing totals reported. Estimates are made for those processors whose reports are not available in time to be included in the release. These plants are identified by an asterisk on page 6 of this release. Estimates are normally based on the processor's previous report and current conditions. Published totals are a straight summation of the individual reports and estimated data. Price items are weighted by the associated volumes to compute weighted average prices. The published price for total whole fish, however, reflects an adjustment to the round and gutted only price to bring it to an equivalent dressed weight price.

If a plant uses a fiscal accounting system, prorating is used to convert reported data to a calendar month basis. Only national level estimates are published due to the limited number of plants involved.

One unique feature of the *Catfish Processing* report is the listing of cooperating processors by name on each month's release. This feature originally was used to solicit industry cooperation in maintaining coverage, but it has continued because of the processors' overall acceptance of this policy.

Import and export data for catfish, which are compiled by the United States Census Bureau, are also included in this report.

**Revision Policy:** Revisions may be necessary in the previous month's publication based on late reports received from plants. These revisions are made to improve month to month relationships. In February, all monthly estimates for the previous year are reviewed and subject to revision. This review is primarily based on data that may have been received after the original estimates were published.

**Reliability:** Estimates are based on a census of all known active processors and, therefore, have no sampling variability. However, estimates may be subject to errors such as omissions, duplication, and mistakes in reporting, recording, and processing of the data. These errors are minimized through strict quality controls in the edit and summarization process, and a careful review of all reported data for consistency and reasonableness.

### Processing data were compiled in cooperation with the following processors:

America's Catch, Inc.	Heartland Catfish
Carolina Classics Catfish, LLC	Lake's Farm Raised Catfish, Inc.
Consolidated Catfish Producers, LLC	Pride of the Pond
Delta Supreme Fish Processors	Prime Line, Inc.
Fish Breeders of Idaho, Inc.	Seabrook Seafood, Inc.
Freshwater Farms Products, LLC	Simmons Farm Raised Catfish, Inc.
Guidry Catfish, Inc.	SouthFresh Farms
Haring's Pride Catfish	Superior Fish Products
Harvest Select Catfish, Inc.	

## Terms and Definitions Used for Catfish Processing Estimates

**Average Price Paid to Producers:** Refers to the price of fish delivered to the processing plant door. Price includes charges for any services provided by the processing plant, such as seining and hauling, but does not include any adjustments based on year-end settlements.

**Fillets:** Boned sides of the fish, cut lengthwise away from the backbone. Includes regular, shank, and strip fillets; excludes any breaded products.

**Fresh Fish:** Fish intended for immediate consumption. Also referred to as ice-packed.

**Frozen Fish:** Fish which are individually quick frozen and glazed (IQF) or individually bagged and bulk frozen.

***Ictalurus spp.:*** All species under this genus, which includes channel catfish, blue catfish, and other catfish species.

**Nuggets:** Small fillets cuts from below the rib section of the fish and usually includes weight of breading and added ingredients.

**Other Products:** Includes steaks, nuggets, and all other products not separately reported including the weight of breading and added ingredients.

***Pangasius spp.:*** All species under this genus, which includes basa, tra, stuchi catfish, and other catfish species.

**Round & Guttled Only:** Fish with no processing done or viscera only removed.

**Round Weight:** The term for a fish's live weight.

**Siluriformes:** The scientific order which contains all families of catfish.

**Steaks:** Cross-section cuts from larger dressed fish.

**Strips:** Finger size pieces of fish cut from fillets and usually includes breading or added ingredients.

**Whole Dressed:** Weight of whole fish with only head, viscera, and skin removed. Generally, 60 percent of the live weight remains as dressed fish.

## 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)

Dan Kerestes, Chief, Livestock Branch .....	(202) 720-3570
Bruce Boess, Head, Poultry and Specialty Commodities Section .....	(202) 720-4447
Cody Brokmeyer – Poultry Slaughter, Turkey Hatchery, Turkeys Raised .....	(202) 690-3237
David Colwell – Cold Storage .....	(202) 720-8784
LaKeya Jones – Catfish Processing, Catfish Production, Trout Production, Census of Aquaculture, Honey, Mink .....	(202) 720-0585
Dawn Keen – Egg Products .....	(202) 720-4448
Kim Linonis – Layers, Eggs .....	(202) 690-8632
Miste Salmon – Broiler Hatchery, Chicken Hatchery .....	(202) 720-3244

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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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