



Catfish Production

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Water Surface Acres down Slightly

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, 2019, totaled 57.9 thousand acres, down slightly from a year ago. Acres used for foodsize fish totaled 46.3 thousand acres, down slightly from the same time period in 2018. Acres used for fingerling production are unchanged at 7.41 thousand acres, and acres for broodfish are unchanged at 1.74 thousand acres. Of the total acres in production, 1.56 thousand were scheduled to be renovated from July 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019, while acres taken out of production during the January 1, 2019, through June 30, 2019, period totaled 1,110 acres.

Foodsize Inventory up 6 Percent

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 111 million foodsize fish on hand on July 1, 2019, up 6 percent from July 1, 2018. The breakouts of foodsize fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2019, with their respective percent change from the previous year were: large foodsize, 2.41 million fish, down 16 percent; medium foodsize, 31.0 million fish, down 1 percent; and small foodsize, 77.2 million fish, up 10 percent. The three major States also had 730 thousand broodfish on hand on July 1, 2019, up 34 percent from last year's 545 thousand broodfish.

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 296 million stockers on hand on July 1, 2019, down 8 percent from the July 1, 2018, total of 322 million stockers. The breakouts of stocker fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2019, with their respective change from the previous year were: large stockers, 149 million fish, down 18 percent; and small stockers, 147 million, up 5 percent from last year. Producers had 512 million fingerlings and fry on hand on July 1, 2019, down 5 percent from July 1, 2018.

Water Surface Acres Used for Production – Major States: 2018 and 2019

State	Water surface acres used for production July 1 - December 31	
	2018 (acres)	2019 (acres)
Alabama	17,000	16,900
Arkansas	4,700	4,700
Mississippi	36,400	36,300
3 State total	58,100	57,900

Catfish Water Surface Acres by Use – Major States: 2018 and 2019

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)	
2018						
Alabama	16,500	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
3 State total	46,500	7,410	1,740	3,180	1,160	455
2019						
Alabama	16,400	210	(D)	300	(D)	680
Arkansas	3,000	1,200	(D)	155	(D)	-
Mississippi	26,900	6,000	1,500	1,100	500	430
3 State total	46,300	7,410	1,740	1,555	820	1,110

- Represents zero.

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

Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2018 and 2019

Size category and State	Fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
	(1,000 fish)	(1,000 fish)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(pounds per fish)	(pounds per fish)
Large foodsize						
Alabama	1,020	1,090	3,850	4,300	3.8	3.9
Arkansas	400	210	1,370	756	3.4	3.6
Mississippi	1,440	1,110	5,300	3,800	3.7	3.4
3 State total	2,860	2,410	10,520	8,856	3.7	3.7
Medium foodsize						
Alabama	11,400	13,900	22,000	26,900	1.9	1.9
Arkansas	2,390	2,000	4,500	3,800	1.9	1.9
Mississippi	17,600	15,100	33,000	27,900	1.9	1.8
3 State total	31,390	31,000	59,500	58,600	1.9	1.9
Small foodsize						
Alabama	23,000	25,000	23,400	24,800	1.0	1.0
Arkansas	3,890	4,520	3,800	4,500	1.0	1.0
Mississippi	43,200	47,700	41,100	45,700	1.0	1.0
3 State total	70,090	77,220	68,300	75,000	1.0	1.0
All foodsize						
Alabama	35,420	39,990	49,250	56,000	(X)	(X)
Arkansas	6,680	6,730	9,670	9,056	(X)	(X)
Mississippi	62,240	63,910	79,400	77,400	(X)	(X)
3 State total	104,340	110,630	138,320	142,456	(X)	(X)
Broodfish						
Alabama	10	(D)	45	(D)	4.5	(D)
Arkansas	45	(D)	197	(D)	4.4	(D)
Mississippi	490	510	2,350	2,500	4.8	4.9
3 State total	545	730	2,592	3,393	4.8	4.6

See footnote(s) at end of table.

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Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2018 and 2019 (continued)

Size category and State	Fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
	(1,000 fish)	(1,000 fish)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(pounds per 1,000 fish)	(pounds per 1,000 fish)
Large stockers						
Alabama	52,400	47,000	17,600	19,100	336	406
Arkansas	12,700	10,600	3,400	2,950	268	278
Mississippi	116,000	91,300	36,600	33,600	316	368
3 State total	181,100	148,900	57,600	55,650	318	374
Small stockers						
Alabama	36,800	61,900	3,550	5,650	96	91
Arkansas	15,400	5,640	1,520	495	98	87
Mississippi	88,600	79,700	9,150	8,450	103	106
3 State total	140,800	147,240	14,220	14,595	101	99
Total stockers						
Alabama	89,200	108,900	21,150	24,750	(X)	(X)
Arkansas	28,100	16,240	4,920	3,445	(X)	(X)
Mississippi	204,600	171,000	45,750	42,050	(X)	(X)
3 State total	321,900	296,140	71,820	70,245	(X)	(X)
Fingerlings and fry						
Alabama	12,500	(D)	295	(D)	23.6	(D)
Arkansas	66,700	(D)	1,070	(D)	16.0	(D)
Mississippi	461,000	444,000	8,150	6,350	17.7	14.3
3 State total	540,200	512,300	9,515	7,329	17.6	14.3

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

(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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- Cornell’s Mann Library has launched a new website housing NASS’s and other agency’s archived reports. The new website, <https://usda.library.cornell.edu>. All email subscriptions containing reports will be sent from the new website, <https://usda.library.cornell.edu>. To continue receiving the reports via e-mail, you will have to go to the new website, create a new account and re-subscribe to the reports. If you need instructions to set up an account or subscribe, they are located at: <https://usda.library.cornell.edu/help>. You should whitelist notifications@usda-esmis.library.cornell.edu in your email client to avoid the emails going into spam/junk folders.

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@usda.gov.

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