



Catfish Processing

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Special Note

Due to funding reductions, this is the last scheduled Catfish Processing report. For more information, refer to http://www.nass.usda.gov/Newsroom/Notices/10_17_2011.asp.

Catfish Processing Down 23 Percent from Last Year

Farm-raised catfish processed during September 2011 totaled 30.3 million pounds round weight, down 23 percent from September 2010. The average price paid to producers was \$1.28 per pound for September 2011, down 0.2 cent from last month but 45.9 cents above a year ago.

Net pounds of processed fish sold during September 2011 totaled 13.4 million pounds, down 34 percent from the comparable month in 2010. Sales of fresh fish, at 4.13 million pounds, were down 38 percent from September 2010 and represented 31 percent of total sales. Frozen fish sales, at 9.28 million pounds, were down 32 percent from a year ago and accounted for the remaining 69 percent of total fish sales. Sales of whole fish represented 16 percent of the total fish sold, fillets accounted for 58 percent, and the remaining 26 percent were mostly steaks, nuggets, and value added products. The total end of the month inventory increased 29 percent from last month but was down 12 percent from a year ago.

The total fresh and frozen average price for September 2011 was \$3.72, up \$1.22 from a year ago. The September 2011 average price received by processors for total fresh fish was \$3.72 per pound, up \$1.24 from last year. Prices for fresh whole fish were \$2.65 per pound, up \$1.02 from September 2010. Prices for fresh fillets were up \$1.64 from a year ago at \$4.88 per pound. Total frozen fish averaged \$3.72 per pound, up \$1.20 from September 2010. Prices for frozen whole dressed fish were up 92 cents at \$3.17 and frozen fillets at \$4.53 per pound were up \$1.56 from a year ago.

Imports for consumption of *Ictalurus* spp., *Pangasius* spp., and other catfish of the order Siluriformes for August 2011 totaled 18.4 million pounds, up 85 percent from the amount imported in August 2010. Imports were from Cambodia, China, Thailand, and Vietnam. The *Ictalurus* spp. imports totaled 39.0 thousand pounds, which were from China.

Fresh catfish fillet exports totaled 72.7 thousand pounds, all of which went to Canada. No exports of frozen catfish fillets for August 2011 were reported.

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: 2010-2011

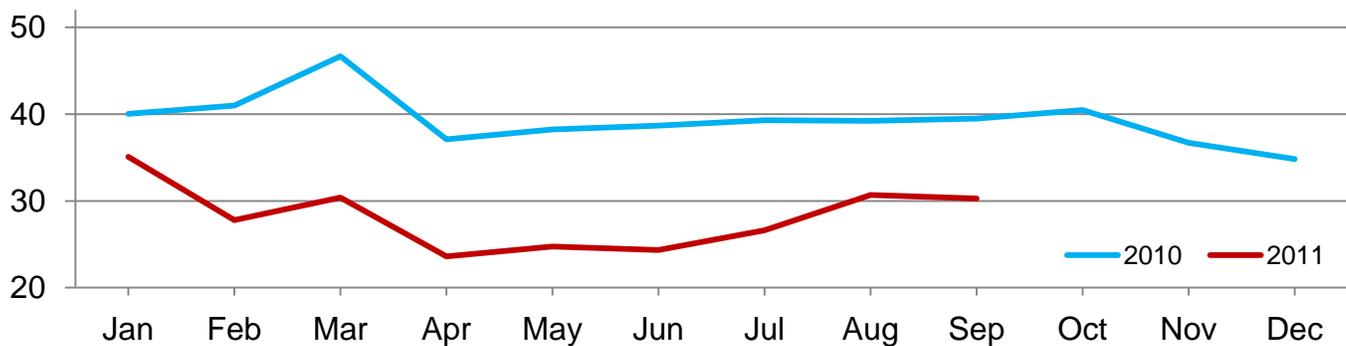
[Blank cells indicate estimation period has not yet begun.]

| Month | Round weight processed | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|----------------|-----------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| | Monthly | | | Cumulative | | | Price per pound ¹ | | |
| | 2010 | 2011 | 2011 as percent of 2010 | 2010 | 2011 | 2011 as percent of 2010 | 2010 | 2011 | Change from 2010 |
| (1,000 pounds) | (1,000 pounds) | (percent) | (1,000 pounds) | (1,000 pounds) | (percent) | (dollars) | (dollars) | (dollars) | |
| January | 40,042 | 35,076 | 88 | 40,042 | 35,076 | 88 | 0.764 | 0.931 | 0.167 |
| February | 40,977 | 27,782 | 68 | 81,019 | 62,858 | 78 | 0.765 | 1.003 | 0.238 |
| March | 46,650 | 30,372 | 65 | 127,669 | 93,230 | 73 | 0.785 | 1.075 | 0.290 |
| April | 37,111 | 23,605 | 64 | 164,780 | 116,835 | 71 | 0.804 | 1.141 | 0.337 |
| May | 38,244 | 24,749 | 65 | 203,024 | 141,584 | 70 | 0.796 | 1.169 | 0.373 |
| June | 38,656 | 24,337 | 63 | 241,680 | 165,921 | 69 | 0.786 | 1.231 | 0.445 |
| July | 39,302 | 26,595 | 68 | 280,982 | 192,516 | 69 | 0.788 | 1.252 | 0.464 |
| August | 39,231 | 30,680 | 78 | 320,213 | 223,196 | 70 | 0.790 | 1.277 | 0.487 |
| September | 39,494 | 30,271 | 77 | 359,707 | 253,467 | 70 | 0.816 | 1.275 | 0.459 |
| October | 40,455 | | | 400,162 | | | 0.832 | | |
| November | 36,683 | | | 436,845 | | | 0.841 | | |
| December | 34,838 | | | 471,683 | | | 0.861 | | |

¹ 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.

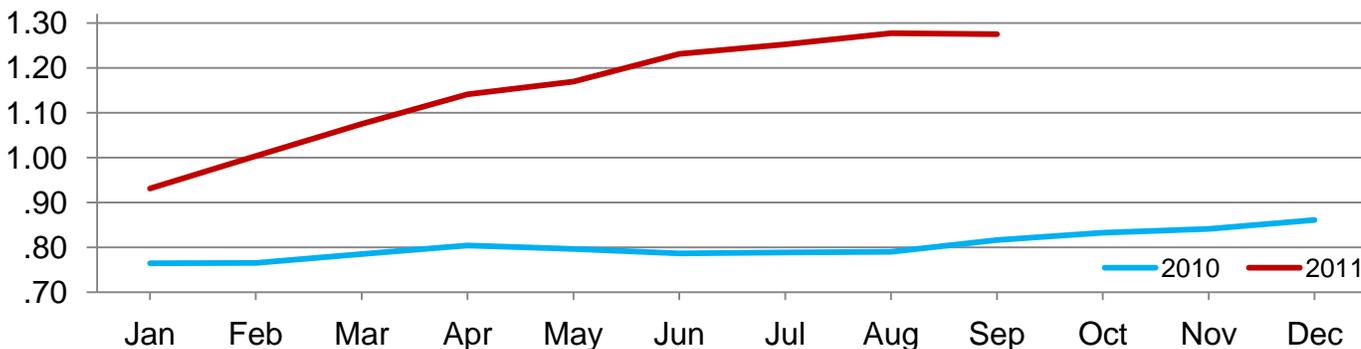
Catfish Processed – United States

Million pounds



Average Catfish Grower Price – United States

Dollars per pound



**Processed Farm-Raised Catfish Sales Volume and Average Price by Month – United States:
2010 and 2011**

| Item ¹ | Sales volume | | | Average price ² | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| | September 2010 | August 2011 | September 2011 | September 2010 | August 2011 | September 2011 |
| | (1,000 pounds) | (1,000 pounds) | (1,000 pounds) | (dollars per pound) | (dollars per pound) | (dollars per pound) |
| Fresh fish | | | | | | |
| Whole | | | | | | |
| Round and gutted | 1,135 | 771 | 672 | 1.15 | 1.93 | 1.91 |
| Whole dressed | 1,383 | 930 | 963 | 1.97 | 3.07 | 3.08 |
| Total | 2,518 | 1,701 | 1,635 | 1.63 | 2.61 | 2.65 |
| Other | | | | | | |
| Steaks | 85 | 52 | 44 | 2.43 | 3.52 | 3.61 |
| Nuggets | 508 | 384 | 371 | 1.37 | 1.91 | 1.93 |
| Other | 54 | 26 | 29 | 3.50 | 4.87 | 4.89 |
| Total | 647 | 462 | 444 | 1.69 | 2.26 | 2.29 |
| Fillets | 3,456 | 2,199 | 2,047 | 3.24 | 4.77 | 4.88 |
| Total fresh | 6,621 | 4,362 | 4,126 | 2.48 | 3.66 | 3.72 |
| Frozen fish | | | | | | |
| Whole dressed | 759 | 585 | 508 | 2.25 | 3.15 | 3.17 |
| Other | | | | | | |
| Steaks | 64 | 92 | 43 | 2.31 | 3.12 | 3.33 |
| Nuggets | 3,237 | 2,279 | 2,151 | 1.08 | 1.40 | 1.40 |
| Other | 1,195 | 498 | 852 | 3.41 | 4.08 | 4.50 |
| Total | 4,496 | 2,869 | 3,046 | 1.72 | 1.92 | 2.29 |
| Fillets | 8,404 | 6,417 | 5,730 | 2.97 | 4.47 | 4.53 |
| Total frozen | 13,659 | 9,871 | 9,284 | 2.52 | 3.65 | 3.72 |
| Fresh and frozen fish | | | | | | |
| Whole | | | | | | |
| Round and gutted | 1,135 | 771 | 672 | 1.15 | 1.93 | 1.91 |
| Whole dressed | 2,142 | 1,515 | 1,471 | 2.07 | 3.10 | 3.11 |
| Total | 3,277 | 2,286 | 2,143 | 1.78 | 2.75 | 2.77 |
| Other | | | | | | |
| Steaks | 149 | 144 | 87 | 2.38 | 3.26 | 3.47 |
| Nuggets | 3,745 | 2,663 | 2,522 | 1.12 | 1.47 | 1.48 |
| Other | 1,249 | 524 | 881 | 3.41 | 4.12 | 4.51 |
| Total | 5,143 | 3,331 | 3,490 | 1.71 | 1.97 | 2.29 |
| Fillets | 11,860 | 8,616 | 7,777 | 3.05 | 4.55 | 4.62 |
| Total fresh and frozen fish | 20,280 | 14,233 | 13,410 | 2.50 | 3.65 | 3.72 |

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

² Gross value FOB plant.

Processed Farm-Raised Catfish Ending Inventory by Month – United States: 2010 and 2011

| Item ¹ | Ending inventory | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | September 2010 (1,000 pounds) | August 2011 (1,000 pounds) | September 2011 (1,000 pounds) |
| Fresh fish | | | |
| Whole | | | |
| Round and gutted | (D) | (D) | (D) |
| Whole dressed | (D) | (D) | (D) |
| Total | 225 | 122 | 119 |
| Other | | | |
| Steaks | (D) | (D) | (D) |
| Nuggets | 111 | 66 | 65 |
| Other | (D) | (D) | (D) |
| Total | 118 | 73 | 71 |
| Fillets | 531 | 389 | 395 |
| Total fresh | 874 | 584 | 585 |
| Frozen fish | | | |
| Whole dressed | 645 | 372 | 458 |
| Other | | | |
| Steaks | (D) | (D) | (D) |
| Nuggets | 1,310 | 1,601 | 1,929 |
| Other | (D) | (D) | (D) |
| Total | 1,917 | 2,212 | 2,389 |
| Fillets | 6,076 | 3,312 | 4,946 |
| Total frozen | 8,638 | 5,896 | 7,793 |
| Fresh and frozen fish | | | |
| Whole | | | |
| Round and gutted | (D) | (D) | (D) |
| Whole dressed | (D) | (D) | (D) |
| Total | 870 | 494 | 577 |
| Other | | | |
| Steaks | (D) | (D) | (D) |
| Nuggets | 1,421 | 1,667 | 1,994 |
| Other | (D) | (D) | (D) |
| Total | 2,035 | 2,285 | 2,460 |
| Fillets | 6,607 | 3,701 | 5,341 |
| Total fresh and frozen fish | 9,512 | 6,480 | 8,378 |

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

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

Catfish Imports by Month – United States: 2010-2011

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

| Month | Imports | | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| | Ictalurus spp. | | | Total ¹ | | |
| | 2010 | 2011 | 2011 as percent of 2010 | 2010 | 2011 | 2011 as percent of 2010 |
| | (1,000 pounds) | (1,000 pounds) | (percent) | (1,000 pounds) | (1,000 pounds) | (percent) |
| January | 3,091 | 1,301 | 42 | 14,612 | 16,276 | 111 |
| February | 2,150 | 1,015 | 47 | 10,421 | 13,790 | 132 |
| March | 1,179 | 211 | 18 | 7,608 | 9,133 | 120 |
| April | 1,220 | 216 | 18 | 8,804 | 13,325 | 151 |
| May | 656 | 113 | 17 | 9,971 | 16,314 | 164 |
| June | 651 | 11 | 2 | 10,293 | 14,643 | 142 |
| July | 516 | 19 | 4 | 10,268 | 18,034 | 176 |
| August | 70 | 39 | 56 | 9,957 | 18,383 | 185 |
| September | 195 | | | 11,626 | | |
| October | 196 | | | 15,046 | | |
| November | 586 | | | 12,032 | | |
| December | 1,269 | | | 16,897 | | |

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

Catfish Exports by Month – United States: 2010-2011

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

| Month | Exports | | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| | Fresh | | | Frozen | | |
| | 2010 | 2011 | 2011 as percent of 2010 | 2010 | 2011 | 2011 as percent of 2010 |
| | (1,000 pounds) | (1,000 pounds) | (percent) | (1,000 pounds) | (1,000 pounds) | (percent) |
| January | 90.4 | 53.9 | 60 | 26.4 | 10.2 | 39 |
| February | 58.2 | 56.7 | 97 | 33.8 | 13.2 | 39 |
| March | 165.8 | 42.3 | 26 | 16.5 | 2.2 | 13 |
| April | 39.5 | 38.7 | 98 | 28.8 | - | (X) |
| May | 47.3 | 41.0 | 87 | 20.5 | 3.0 | 15 |
| June | 34.2 | 38.0 | 111 | 14.9 | 1.8 | 12 |
| July | 39.5 | 150.0 | 380 | 29.7 | 7.8 | 26 |
| August | 45.4 | 72.7 | 160 | 3.3 | - | (X) |
| September | 38.6 | | | 16.4 | | |
| October | 72.5 | | | 20.3 | | |
| November | 40.8 | | | 6.6 | | |
| December | 45.7 | | | 1.3 | | |

- Represents zero.
(X) Not applicable.

Statistical Methodology

Survey Procedures: Survey data for catfish processing are collected from approximately 18 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 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 capture 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. | Harvest Select Catfish, Inc. |
| Carolina Classics Catfish, LLC | Heartland Catfish |
| Consolidated Catfish Producers, LLC | Lake's Farm Raised Catfish, Inc. |
| Delta Supreme Fish Processors | Pride of the Pond |
| Fish Breeders of Idaho, Inc. | Prime Line, Inc. |
| Farm Catch Catfish Processors, Inc. | Seabrook Seafood, Inc. |
| Freshwater Farms Products, LLC | Simmons Farm Raised Catfish, Inc. |
| Guidry Catfish, Inc. | SouthFresh Farms |
| Harings Pride Catfish | Superior Fish Products |

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 & Gutted 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

| | |
|--|----------------|
| 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 |
| Kim Linonis – Layers, Eggs | (202) 690-8632 |
| Miste Salmon – Broiler Hatchery, Catfish Processing, Catfish Production, Census of Aquaculture, Chicken Hatchery, Egg Products, Honey, Mink, Trout Production | (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.

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