



Catfish Production

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Water Surface Acres Down 3 Percent

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, 2021, totaled 53,200 acres, down 3 percent from a year ago. Acres used for Foodsize fish totaled 41,700, down 4 percent from the same time period in 2020. Acres used for Fingerling production at 6,840 acres, are up 3 percent, and acres for Broodfish at 1,605 acres, are up 5 percent. Of the total acres in production, 2,705 acres were scheduled to be renovated from July 1 to December 31, 2021 compared with 685 acres taken out of production during the period of January 1 through June 30, 2021.

Foodsize Inventory Up 4 Percent

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 110 million Foodsize fish on hand on July 1, 2021, up 4 percent from July 1, 2020. The breakouts of Foodsize fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2021, with their respective percent change from the previous year were: Large foodsize at 3.15 million fish, up 27 percent; Medium foodsize at 28.1 million fish, up 7 percent; and Small foodsize at 79.1 million fish, up 3 percent. The three major Catfish producing States also had 615,000 Broodfish on hand on July 1, 2021, up 19 percent from last year's 515,000 Broodfish.

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 317 million Stockers on hand on July 1, 2021, down 2 percent from the July 1, 2020 total of 325 million Stockers. The breakouts of Stocker fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2021, with their respective change from the previous year were: Large stockers at 149 million fish, up slightly from the previous year and Small stockers at 169 million fish, down 5 percent from last year. Producers had 463 million Fingerlings and fry on hand on July 1, 2021, down 1 percent from July 1, 2020.

Water Surface Acres Used for Production - Major States: 2020 and 2021

State	Water surface acres used for production July 1 - December 31	
	2020 (acres)	2021 (acres)
Alabama	15,800	15,600
Arkansas	3,900	3,700
Mississippi	35,100	33,900
3 State total	54,800	53,200

Catfish Water Surface Acres by Use – Major States: 2020 and 2021

Year and State	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)	
2020						
Alabama	15,300	320	30	280	(D)	490
Arkansas	2,600	1,000	95	180	(D)	215
Mississippi	25,600	5,300	1,400	1,600	(D)	890
3 State total	43,500	6,620	1,525	2,060	380	1,595
2021						
Alabama	15,200	340	10	(D)	160	105
Arkansas	2,500	1,000	95	(D)	-	-
Mississippi	24,000	5,500	1,500	2,000	270	580
3 State total	41,700	6,840	1,605	2,705	430	685

- Represents zero.

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

Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2020 and 2021

Size category and State	Fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
	(1,000 fish)	(1,000 fish)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(pounds per fish)	(pounds per fish)
Large foodsize						
Alabama	1,200	1,670	4,500	6,300	3.8	3.8
Arkansas	300	290	1,090	1,020	3.6	3.5
Mississippi	990	1,190	3,200	3,900	3.2	3.3
3 State total	2,490	3,150	8,790	11,220	3.5	3.6
Medium foodsize						
Alabama	11,300	11,800	22,200	23,600	2.0	2.0
Arkansas	2,230	2,360	4,350	4,450	2.0	1.9
Mississippi	12,800	13,900	24,100	26,900	1.9	1.9
3 State total	26,330	28,060	50,650	54,950	1.9	2.0
Small foodsize						
Alabama	25,300	28,900	25,200	28,300	1.0	1.0
Arkansas	3,910	3,650	3,950	3,900	1.0	1.1
Mississippi	47,500	46,500	47,500	46,800	1.0	1.0
3 State total	76,710	79,050	76,650	79,000	1.0	1.0
Total foodsize						
Alabama	37,800	42,370	51,900	58,200	(X)	(X)
Arkansas	6,440	6,300	9,390	9,370	(X)	(X)
Mississippi	61,290	61,590	74,800	77,600	(X)	(X)
3 State total	105,530	110,260	136,090	145,170	(X)	(X)
Broodfish						
Alabama	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi	480	580	2,450	2,950	5.1	5.1
3 State total	515	615	2,607	3,112	5.1	5.1

See footnote(s) at end of table.

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Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2020 and 2021 (continued)

Size category and State	Fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
	(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	47,100	55,900	18,100	20,900	384	374
Arkansas	4,780	5,400	1,320	1,630	276	302
Mississippi	96,400	87,300	35,200	28,900	365	331
3 State total	148,280	148,600	54,620	51,430	368	346
Small stockers						
Alabama	62,100	43,600	5,950	4,500	95.8	103.0
Arkansas	4,550	4,100	468	401	103.0	97.8
Mississippi	110,000	121,000	12,000	14,000	109.0	116.0
3 State total	176,650	168,700	18,418	18,901	104.0	112.0
Total stockers						
Alabama	109,200	99,500	24,050	25,400	(X)	(X)
Arkansas	9,330	9,500	1,788	2,031	(X)	(X)
Mississippi	206,400	208,300	47,200	42,900	(X)	(X)
3 State total	324,930	317,300	73,038	70,331	(X)	(X)
Fingerlings and fry						
Alabama	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi	410,000	418,000	7,550	7,400	18.4	17.7
3 State total	468,810	463,010	8,513	8,179	18.2	17.7

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

(X) Not applicable.

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.

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.

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@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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