

# Survey Training

## Catfish Production Survey - July 1, 2024 (CATFISH PDI)



**United States Department of Agriculture  
National Agricultural Statistics Service**



Workforce Performance and Staff Development Section  
June 2024



# General Survey Information

- Project Code: **170** - Aquaculture Survey
- States Involved:
  - AL, AR, MS
- Questionnaires:
  - Mailed out around June 23
  - Web reporting option available
- Release:
  - *Catfish Production*, July 19 at 3PM EST

# January 2024 Catfish Production

## Water Surface Acres Down 4 Percent from January 1, 2023

The water surface acres being used for catfish production as of January 1, 2024, totaled 53,545 acres, down 4 percent from the 55,855 acres used a year earlier. Of the total acres, 1,855 are to be renovated during the period of January 1 to June 30, 2024. An additional 220 acres are under construction or expected to be constructed and in use by July 1, 2024. During the period of July 1 through December 31, 2023, the area taken out of production totaled 2,425 acres. As of January 1, 2024, Foodsize fish were produced on 43,160 acres, Fingerling producing acres totaled 7,245, and 1,920 acres were being used for Broodfish production.

## Inventory

Catfish producers had 780 thousand Broodfish on hand January 1, 2024, down 12 percent from January 1, 2023. Large foodsize fish on hand totaled 4.02 million on January 1, 2024, down 6 percent from a year ago. The inventory of Medium foodsize fish was up 14 percent to 59.6 million, while Small foodsize fish inventory was down 24 percent at 75.9 million. Large stockers on hand January 1, 2024, at 80.2 million fish, were down 37 percent from the previous year. Small stocker inventory was down 34 percent to 144 million. There were 199 million Fingerlings on hand January 1, 2024, down 29 percent from January 1, 2023.



# Who uses the Data?

- **Government agencies:** To determine sustainability, size, and structure of the industry for planning, policy-making, research and market analysis.
- **Growers:** Decisions about the future of their operations (expand/reduce production or compare production volumes/pricing points with state and U.S. averages).
- **Businesses/Suppliers:** Determine location of facilities for producers, plan for production/marketing of new products.
- **Extension/University:** Research needs and justify research funding and programs for new or improved production methods.

# Terminology

- **Broodfish:** Fish kept for egg production (also includes males), typically above 3 pounds.
- **Fry:** Fish under 2 inches in length weighing less than 2 pounds per 1,000 fish.
- **Fingerling:** Fish 2-6 inches in length weighing 2-60 pounds per 1,000 fish.
- **Foodsize:** Fish weighing over  $\frac{3}{4}$  pound (excluding broodfish).
- **Stocker:** Fish over 6 inches in length weighing 60-750 pounds per 1,000 fish.

# Survey Questions: Identification

- Any water area used to produce catfish in 2024?
  - YES: Survey
  - NO: next screening/identification question
- Any hatchery or foodsize production inventory on the operation during 2024?
  - YES: Survey
  - NO: next screening/identification question
- Any catfish sold during 2024?
  - YES: Survey
  - NO: next screening/identification question
- Any catfish on the operation in the future?
  - Has operation been sold, rented or turned over to someone else?
    - Leave notes on what happened/status of operation

# Survey Questions: Water Area

- Total water area used and to be used during period of July 1 – December 31, 2024?
- Of that:
  - How many acres renovated?
  - How many acres used for broodfish?
  - How many acres used for foodsize?
  - How many acres used exclusively for fingerlings?
- Water area of **new facilities** during period of July 1 – December 31, 2024?
- Water area **taken out of production** during period of January 1 – June 30, 2024?

# Recording Quantity and Weight Inventory

- Catfish Inventory - size by category:
- Broodfish, Large/Med/Small Foodsize:
  - Report in Total Number and Average lb/fish **OR**
  - Report in Total Pounds and Average lb/fish
- Large/Small Stockers, Fingerlings, Fry:
  - Report in Total Number and Average lb/1,000 fish **OR**
  - Report in Total Pounds and Average lb/1,000 fish



# Catfish Inventory Categories

- **Broodfish:**
  - Typically above 3 pounds
- **Foodsize:**
  - Large (over 3 lbs.)
  - Medium (over 1½ - 3 lbs.)
  - Small (over ¾ lbs. – 1½ lbs.)
- **Stockers:**
  - Large (180-750 lbs. per 1,000 fish)
  - Small (60-180 lbs. per 1,000 fish)
- **Fingerlings:**
  - 2-6 inches or 2-60 lbs. per 1,000 fish
- **Fry:**
  - Under 2 inches or less than 2 lbs per 1,000 fish

# Watch For:

Acres for broodfish, foodsize, & fingerlings is greater than total water area acres

- High or low inventory weight.
- Significant change in total water acres.
  - Verify that acres “taken out of production” are actually out of production and not just empty.
- Pounds per fish
  - See the Interviewer’s Manual for weights

# From the RFO:

- Watch out of production vs renovated acres.
  - An operator may say the acres are out now, BUT if they will use them in the next 6 months... they are not out. Those acres should likely be placed in renovated.
    - If unsure, please put comments as to what the operator told you. This will help us figure out what they are doing.
- Total water acres do not have to match total acres reported in use.
  - For example, if an operator says they have 500 acres, but only tells the enumerator 300 ac foodsize and that's it... it's OK. Ponds can be empty the day we called, which can cause discrepancies.

# Things to Remember

- Many operations may be in the rebuilding/renovating phase
- Operators sometimes have different classifying methods or say their catfish could fall in 2 categories
  - Just record where they say the fish should go and leave a comment
- Probe for as much information as possible with weight/numbers
  - Be sure to include notes if unsure how to record

# In Conclusion

- Leave comments for any unusual circumstances. Comments are important on these specialty livestock surveys.
- Comments, Concerns, Questions? Contact your supervisor or RFO.
- Have a good survey!

