



Catfish Production

ISSN: 1948-271X

Released July 17, 2024, by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Agricultural Statistics Board, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Water Surface Acres Down 9 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, 2024, totaled 45,700 acres, down 9 percent from a year ago. Acres used for Foodsize fish totaled 37,600, down 8 percent from the same time period in 2023. Acres used for Fingerling production at 5,460 acres, are down 13 percent, and acres for Broodfish at 1,710 acres, are down 17 percent. Of the total acres in production, 1,200 acres were scheduled to be renovated from July 1 to December 31, 2024 compared with 2,870 acres taken out of production during the period of January 1 through June 30, 2024.

Foodsize Inventory Down Slightly

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 109 million Foodsize fish on hand on July 1, 2024, down slightly from July 1, 2023. The breakouts of Foodsize fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2024, with their respective percent change from the previous year were: Large foodsize at 3.16 million fish, down 11 percent; Medium foodsize at 39.3 million fish, up 3 percent; and Small foodsize at 66.8 million fish, down 2 percent. The three major Catfish producing States also had 1,120,000 Broodfish on hand on July 1, 2024, up 4 percent from last year's 1,080,000 Broodfish.

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 184 million Stockers on hand on July 1, 2024, down 27 percent from the July 1, 2023 total of 252 million Stockers. The breakouts of Stocker fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2024, with their respective change from the previous year were: Large stockers at 88.6 million fish, down 22 percent from the previous year and Small stockers at 95.5 million fish, down 31 percent from last year. Producers had 337 million Fingerlings and fry on hand on July 1, 2024, up 25 percent from July 1, 2023.

Water Surface Acres Used for Production - Major States: 2023 and 2024

State	Water surface acres used for production July 1 - December 31	
	2023	2024
	(acres)	(acres)
Alabama	14,000	12,800
Arkansas	3,400	3,000
Mississippi	32,900	29,900
3 State total	50,300	45,700

Catfish Water Surface Acres by Use – Major States: 2023 and 2024

Year and State	Acres intended for utilization during July 1 - December 31 for					Acres taken out of production during January 1 - June 30
	Foodsize	Fingerlings	Broodfish	Currently under or scheduled for		
				Renovation	New construction	
	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)
2023						
Alabama	13,600	(D)	(D)	300	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	2,200	(D)	(D)	55	-	-
Mississippi	25,100	5,000	1,800	1,100	(D)	(D)
3 State total	40,900	6,260	2,050	1,455	255	455
2024						
Alabama	12,300	310	(D)	115	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	2,300	650	(D)	85	-	(D)
Mississippi	23,000	4,500	1,500	1,000	(D)	1,800
3 State total	37,600	5,460	1,710	1,200	240	2,870

- Represents zero.

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

Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2023 and 2024

Size category and State	Fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(pounds per fish)	(pounds per fish)
Large foodsize						
Alabama	1,520	1,260	5,800	4,900	3.8	3.9
Arkansas	300	370	1,090	1,400	3.6	3.8
Mississippi	1,730	1,530	6,100	5,400	3.5	3.5
3 State total	3,550	3,160	12,990	11,700	3.7	3.7
Medium foodsize						
Alabama	9,190	10,300	18,000	20,900	2.0	2.0
Arkansas	1,900	2,350	3,550	4,700	1.9	2.0
Mississippi	26,900	26,600	53,000	51,900	2.0	2.0
3 State total	37,990	39,250	74,550	77,500	2.0	2.0
Small foodsize						
Alabama	22,800	20,600	20,800	19,700	0.9	1.0
Arkansas	3,420	5,300	3,450	5,300	1.0	1.0
Mississippi	41,600	40,900	46,800	40,900	1.1	1.0
3 State total	67,820	66,800	71,050	65,900	1.0	1.0
Total foodsize						
Alabama	33,510	32,160	44,600	45,500	(X)	(X)
Arkansas	5,620	8,020	8,090	11,400	(X)	(X)
Mississippi	70,230	69,030	105,900	98,200	(X)	(X)
3 State total	109,360	109,210	158,590	155,100	(X)	(X)
Broodfish						
Alabama	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi	1,020	1,030	4,850	4,500	4.8	4.4
3 State total	1,080	1,120	5,114	4,931	4.7	4.4

See footnote(s) at end of table.

--continued

Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2023 and 2024 (continued)

Size category and State	Fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(pounds per 1,000 fish)	(pounds per 1,000 fish)
Large stockers						
Alabama	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi	62,700	57,900	23,200	23,500	370	406
3 State total	113,900	88,550	42,600	37,000	374	418
Small stockers						
Alabama	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi	103,000	62,900	9,100	6,400	88.3	102.0
3 State total	138,030	95,460	13,070	10,410	94.7	109.0
Total stockers						
Alabama	71,600	48,500	18,150	12,650	(X)	(X)
Arkansas	14,630	14,710	5,220	4,860	(X)	(X)
Mississippi	165,700	120,800	32,300	29,900	(X)	(X)
3 State total	251,930	184,010	55,670	47,410	(X)	(X)
Fingerlings and fry						
Alabama	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi	209,000	280,000	5,450	6,200	26.1	22.1
3 State total	268,690	337,110	6,911	7,525	25.7	22.3

(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

Travis Averill, Chief, Livestock Branch	(202) 692-0069
Greg Lemmons, Acting Head, Poultry and Specialty Commodities Section	(202) 720-9526
Holly Brenize – Poultry Slaughter.....	(202) 720-0585
Liana Cuffman – Catfish and Trout, Mink, Census of Aquaculture	(202) 720-8784
Fatema Haque – Turkey Hatchery, Turkeys Raised	(202) 720-3244
Derron Martin – Chicken Hatchery, Egg Products	(202) 690-3237
Seth Riggins – Honey, Honey Bee Colonies	(202) 690-4870
Shulonda Shaw – Cold Storage, Capacity of Refrigerated Warehouses	(202) 720-3240
Autumn Stone – Layers, Eggs	(202) 690-3676
Takiyah Walker – Broiler Hatchery.....	(202) 720-6147

Access to NASS Reports

For your convenience, you may access NASS reports and products the following ways:

- All reports are available electronically, at no cost, on the NASS web site: www.nass.usda.gov.
- Both national and state specific reports are available via a free e-mail subscription. To set-up this free subscription, visit www.nass.usda.gov and click on “National” or “State” in upper right corner above “search” box to create an account and select the reports you would like to receive.
- 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.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#) (PDF), found online at www.ascr.usda.gov/filing-program-discrimination-complaint-usda-customer, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.