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NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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USDA Releases the 2023 Census of Aquaculture Results

WASHINGTON – Dec. 16, 2024 – Total sales of aquaculture products in 2023 were \$1.9 billion, an increase of 26% from 2018, according to the 2023 Census of Aquaculture released today by USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service. In 2023, there were 3,453 aquaculture farms with sales in the United States, up 18% from 2018. Five states – Mississippi, Washington, Louisiana, Florida and Alabama – accounted for 55% of aquaculture sales and 49% of aquaculture farms in 2023. Food fish and mollusks were the largest product categories for sales, with catfish and oysters the top species.

“The 2023 Census of Aquaculture, conducted every 5 years, expands on the data collected during the 2022 Census of Agriculture providing up to date detailed information about the production and marketing practices in the aquaculture industry,” said NASS Administrator Joseph L. Parsons. “These valuable data tell the story of U.S. aquaculture. The information in this report helps trade associations, governments, agribusinesses, and others learn about aquaculture and make informed decisions that have a direct impact on the future of the industry.”

The 2023 Census of Aquaculture provides detailed information about production and methods, surface water acres and sources, sales, point of first sale outlets, and aquaculture distributed for restoration, conservation, enhancement, or recreational purposes. Data highlights include:

- The average sales per farm was \$552,569.
- Sales of food fish was \$819.6 million, an increase of 14% from 2018.
- The sales of mollusks was \$575.5 million, an increase of 30% from 2018.
- Crustacean sales in 2023 was \$175.7 million, up 75% from 2018.
- Catfish sales, valued at \$480.0 million, accounted for 59% of all food fish sales in 2023.
- Oyster sales, valued at \$327.0 million, accounted for 57% of mollusk sales in 2023.
- Mississippi led the nation in total aquaculture sales in 2023 with \$277.0 million.

An aquaculture farm is defined as any place from which \$1,000 or more of aquaculture products were produced and sold or distributed for restoration, conservation, enhancement, or recreation during the census year. Aquaculture is defined as the farming of aquatic organisms, including baitfish, crustaceans, food fish, mollusks, ornamental fish, sport or game fish, and other aquaculture products. Farming involves some form of intervention in the rearing process, such as seeding, stocking, feeding, protection from predators, etc. Fish, crustaceans, mollusks, and other aquatic products caught or harvested by the public from non-controlled waters or beds are considered wild caught and are not included as aquaculture.

The Census of Aquaculture is a Census of Agriculture special study, or follow-on, that expands on the data collected for 2022. The last Census of Aquaculture was conducted in 2018. To access the 2023 Census of Aquaculture results and other agriculture census data, visit www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus.

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