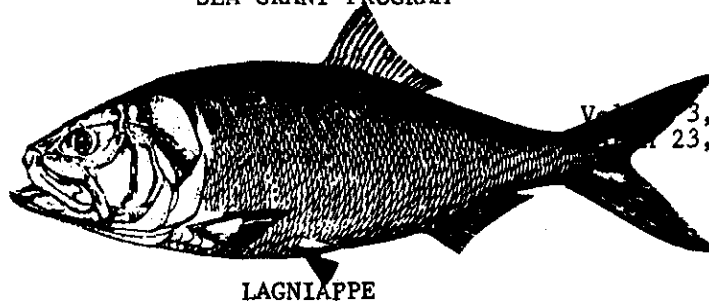


# LOUISIANA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

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## SEA GRANT PROGRAM



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LAGNIAPPE

## CROAKERS AND SHRIMP

As I've been saying for quite sometime, the 200-mile limit will have a bigger effect on Louisiana commercial fisheries than many fishermen expected. When the law was first passed, many people thought that all it would do is keep foreign boats out of our newly claimed waters.

However, also under the law, plans were made for regional management councils to decide how the fish, shrimp or crabs are to be managed. Right now the groundfish management plan is nearing completion. The first thing that the average shrimper will say is "Aw heck that's just about croakers. That doesn't concern me." But it does!! Some of the recommended management steps for croakers will directly affect shrimping if they stay the way they are.

One recommended management measure is to put in regulations on the kind of shrimping gear used offshore to lower the amount of croakers caught. Another recommendation is to ask the states to establish seasonal sanctuaries inside, where no trawling is permitted. This will allow the baby croakers to grow up.

They are also taking a hard look at the use of salt barrels on shrimp boats. Since the salt kills a lot of croakers they may be done away with.

Fortunately, under the law, public hearings will be held along the coast to find out how the people feel about these and other recommendations. I understand that environmental and protection groups will push hard for measures to protect the croakers from destruction in shrimp trawls. I strongly recommend that commercial shrimpers attend the public hearings on groundfish as it will affect them also.

## LAC DES ALLEMANDS BUOYS

The buoy system which the fishermen who fish Lake Des Allemands have wanted so long looks like its finally becoming a reality. The pre-application has cleared the Federal level in Washington and has been approved by George Fischer of the State Department of Commerce. Hopefully, if everything goes alright, installation can begin in early summer.

I'd like to thank the many people that have worked with us in getting the project this far. This includes the Police Juries and Coastal Management Committees of St. Charles, St. John, Lafourche and St. James Parishes. Martha Landry of the South Central Planning and Development Commission put the pre-application together and

Larry Brock, LSU Extension County Agent for St. John Parish and Father William McCallion of Des Allemands were vital for coordination of the project.

State Senator Ron Landry and State Representatives Billy Tauzin, Ralph Miller, and J. Accardo provided the support we had to have to make this project a success.

The proposed buoy system at this time will have a line extending from deep in Two Oaks Bay to the Vacherie Canal. A second line will run across the first, from the Humble Oil Field to Bayou Boeuf. With this system, tugboats and crewboats will be guided away from the reefs. This will prevent the destruction of fishing gear and grounds.

#### CATFISH FARMING

Down south, catfish is king. In fact, in areas away from the coast, catfish is the favorite southern foodfish. While here in south Louisiana most catfish eaten are wild catfish, farm raised catfish are becoming more and more popular in the rest of the southern U.S.

On a recent trip I took through northern Mississippi and Alabama, just about every restaurant offered farm-raised catfish and it was the special at most of them. It's been estimated that almost 5,000 people are in the fish farming business in the United States and 70% of the 100 million pounds they produce every year are catfish. In 1960, only about 400 acres in the U.S. was in catfish farming. The figure today is about 56,000 acres.

While catfish farming is getting to be big business, it's not exactly an easy business. Farmers received about 60 cents a pound for live fish in 1977, but when more people jumped into the business, prices dropped to about 52 cents in the summer of 1978.

Also according to U.S. Department of Agriculture, an estimated 95% of all the people who start fish farming the first time go broke. Of the 5 percent that make it, almost all of them were already some kind of farmer before they took up fish farming. It is felt that the reason that they make it is because they treat fish farming just like any other kind of farming, with problems in marketing, fertilization and transportation.

Fish farming is definitely not for the part-time investor. It also requires huge amounts of money and is one of the most expensive farming operations around.

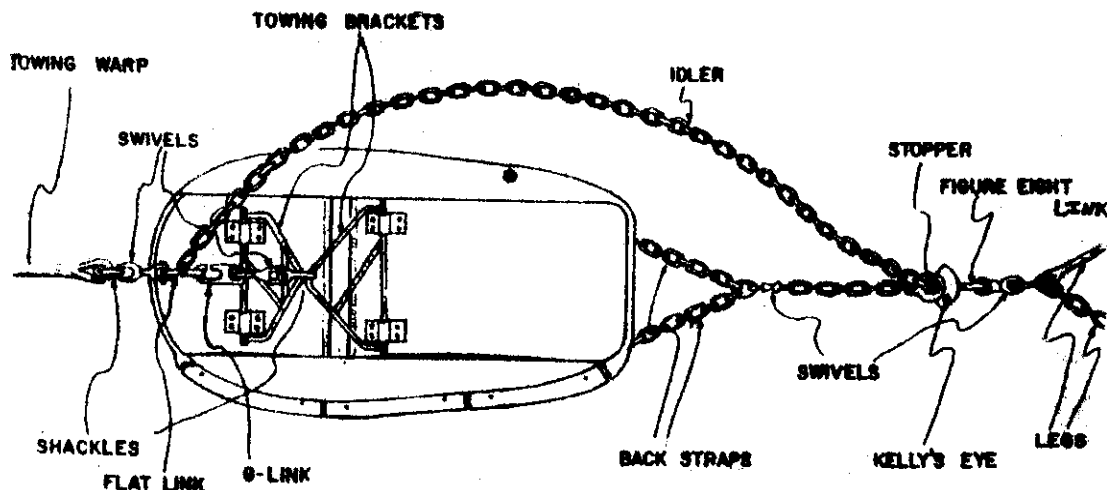
Even with its problems, catfish farming is still growing. According to estimates from the National Marine Fisheries Service, two-thirds of all the catfish produced in the U.S. today are farm-raised. Many people feel that even more will be farmed in the future. Source: Farm Index, U.S. Department of Agriculture. November 1978.

#### FISH IS BRAIN FOOD

You've probably heard that saying a hundred dozen times. This saying dates back to a Harvard scientist in the 19th century. He found that the element phosphorus was abundant in the brain and so he felt that eating things like fish which is rich in phosphorus, would increase your brain power. Unfortunately, the idea that phosphorus will improve your IQ has long since been proven wrong. Source: California Marine Advisory Programs Newsletter. Oct. 1978.

## PORTUGUESE POLYVALENT TRAWL DOOR

Researchers at the University of Rhode Island Marine Advisory Service have recently completed the construction diagrams for the Portuguese polyvalent door. This door has bolt-on shoes and a flotation tank on the top. It is also smaller and spreads more than the standard rectangular door.



To choose the correct size for the Portuguese doors on your boat, take the surface area of your old door and divide it by 1.25. Also, the weight of the door should be 2.2 pounds per shaft horse power.

Using these doors allows a fisherman to pull a larger net. If you choose to stay with the same size net, a smaller door can be used. This should reduce drag and so reduce fuel consumption. I expect to be getting the plans in soon. Anyone interested in seeing them should contact me at my office.

Source: URI Commercial Fisheries Newsletter, Winter 1978.

## CONCHS AND OYSTERS

The conch or southern oyster drill as biologists call it, is probably the worst oyster-eater in the Gulf of Mexico. This innocent-looking snail has a tongue called a radula that is full of teeth that it uses to drill through an oyster shell to get at the meat inside.

It seems that the worst size conch for drilling oysters are the medium-sized ones. A conch can kill and eat a large oyster every few days and can kill nearly 100 week-old spat every day. Higher temperatures which weaken the oysters also cause the conch to increase their feeding rates.

The reason that conchs can cause so much damage is because of their tremendous breeding rate. When they get together for breeding, each one produces about 8, but up to 17 egg capsules an hour. Each egg capsule can produce up to 900 little conchs. When the little conchs hatch they are carried around by the tides and currents and are spread just about everywhere. Its no wonder that oyster fishermen hate conchs worse than just about anything else.

Source: Marine Maladies? Worms, Germs and Other Symbionts From the Northern Gulf of Mexico. 1978. R.M. Overstreet. Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium.

## MORE ON CONCHS & OYSTERS

In some work done by biologists in Mississippi, it was found that not all oysters that are killed by conchs are drilled. They found that 30% of the oysters killed by conchs had no hole in the shell at all and many with holes had holes so tiny that the conchs couldn't feed through them.

What the biologists found was that the conch releases a poison which paralyzes the oysters. When the oyster becomes paralyzed, it can't close its shell and the conch eats it up. Oysters that were killed this way often will have purple stains on the shells left behind.

Source: Killing Mechanisms of the Oyster Barer. Proceedings of the National Shellfisheries Association. Vol. 62, June 1972. K. McGraw, G. Gunter.

## TEXAS SPECK LAW

Texas has now followed Louisiana and Mississippi and put a limit on the number of speckled trout that sports fishermen may catch. The new limit is 20 fish per day with a 40 fish possession limit. Commercial fishermen were not restricted, but all speckled trout kept, either commercial or sport must be 12 inches or longer. The law took effect December 1, 1978.

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### THE GUMBO POT

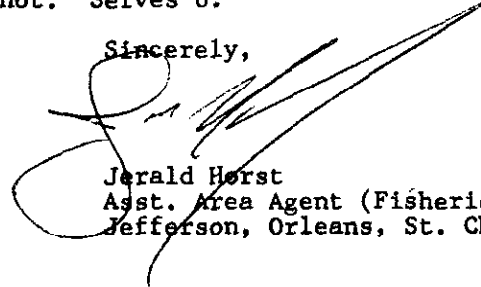
#### Shrimp and Mushroom Soup

This is a recipe for mushroom lovers. Since I like mushrooms, I find that a pound of shrimp to a pound of mushrooms gives a nice balance. If you like the taste that mushrooms give but aren't too fond of the mushrooms themselves, you may want to use a little less mushrooms. By the way, I've been on the lookout for a good oyster and artichoke soup recipe. If you know of one, I'd appreciate hearing from you.

1 pound shrimp	1 tsp. dry dill
1 pound fresh mushrooms	White pepper
1 stick butter	Salt
3 cups chicken broth	Flour
1/2 pint cream	

Peel shrimp and if shrimp are large cut in half or thirds. Saute sliced mushrooms in butter. Make chicken broth with 3 bullion cubes. Add broth to mushrooms and heat. Add dill and salt, white pepper to taste. Mix flour with a little water then add a little at a time until soup thickens as desired and cook 5-10 minutes. Add shrimp and heat till cooked. Add cream and serve hot. Serves 6.

Sincerely,



Jerald Horst  
Asst. Area Agent (Fisheries)  
Jefferson, Orleans, St. Charles

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