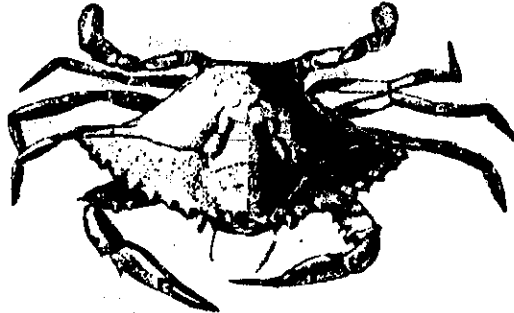


## SEA GRANT PROGRAM



### LAGNIAPPE

#### SOFT CRAB PRODUCER/MARKETER LIST

This year has seen more growth in softshell crab production than any year in the past. Right now the market for soft crabs is very strong, as east coast production has not started yet. Many producers are concerned that when the east coast does begin producing soft crabs the market may weaken.

In order to assist Louisiana soft crab producers in marketing their product nationwide, John Supan, the Extension Marine Advisory Agent for Orleans and St. Tammany Parishes, is putting together a Louisiana Soft Crab Producer and Marketer's List. If you produce, or sell soft-shell crabs and would like to be included on this list, contact my office before May 15, 1988 and submit the following information:

company name (if you have one)  
contact person's name  
address  
telephone number  
product forms available - fresh and/or frozen

This list will be made available to people from other parts of the U.S. who are interested in buying Louisiana soft-shell crabs.

#### SPORTSMEN'S PARADISE

Recently I read an article in one of my fellow Marine Advisory Agent's (John Supan) newsletters that I found very interesting. I know I was catching more speckled trout in 1986 and 1987 than ever, but I didn't know trout fishing was this good. What follows below has been quoted directly from John's newsletter.

Marine recreational statistics are available from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the same agency that compiles commercial landing statistics. The Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey has been conducted since 1979 to obtain estimates of participation, catch and effort by recreational fishermen in the marine waters of the United States.

The survey is conducted by on-site field interviews of recreational fishermen, followed by household telephone surveys. The field interviews obtain the number, weight and length of fish caught by species, the county/state of residence, the area of fishing (inshore, offshore), how often they fish, and the method used (gear type, shore fishing, private/rental boat or charter). The household telephone surveys obtained the number of marine finfishermen per household, the number of marine fishing trips in the past 2 months, the location of each trip, and the method used.

The final estimates are achieved by multiplying the telephone data (number of fish trips for each state by method and area) by the field interview data (average catch per trip by species, method, and area). The results are the number of each species caught by method and area for each state. The statistical methods and formulas are quite complex, but they are based on random sampling of the field survey sites and the households contacted. Large amounts of data are collected to assure unbiased results.

Estimates of the total weight of a species caught by recreational marine fishing in Louisiana can be determined from the final reports of this survey, beginning in 1979 to the most recent 1986 report. The average weight of a species can be determined and then multiplied by the estimated number of that species caught in the state. The numbers below are for speckled trout and redfish:

Total weight of speckled trout caught recreationally in Louisiana:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total number caught</u>	<u>Average weight</u>	<u>Total pounds</u>
1979	2,824,000	1.1 lbs.	3,106,400
1980	6,377,000	1.0 lbs.	6,377,000
1981	2,581,000	1.1 lbs.	2,839,100
1982	6,207,000	1.3 lbs.	8,069,100
1983	7,521,000	1.1 lbs.	8,273,100
1984	1,320,000	1.1 lbs.	1,716,000
1985	5,809,000	1.1 lbs.	6,389,900
1986	13,038,000	1.1 lbs.	14,341,800

Total weight of redfish caught recreationally in Louisiana:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total number caught</u>	<u>Average weight</u>	<u>Total pounds</u>
1979	2,679,000	2.1 lbs.	5,625,900
1980	1,823,000	2.4 lbs.	4,375,200
1981	445,000	2.1 lbs.	934,500
1982	1,731,000	2.2 lbs.	3,821,400
1983	2,901,000	2.1 lbs.	6,092,100
1984	1,291,000	2.3 lbs.	2,969,300
1985	1,504,000	2.8 lbs.	4,211,200
1986	2,152,000	2.1 lbs.	4,519,200

The 1981 survey was not conducted during January and February, possibly accounting for the low redfish catch that year.

Other interesting numbers are also available from the surveys. During 1986, over 80% of the fish were taken from inland waters. In the Gulf, speckled trout was the most commonly caught species with 16% of the total catch. Approximately 71% of the total number of fish taken in the Gulf were by anglers in private or rented boats and had the highest catch rate with 14.5 fish/trip. Shore fishing had the lowest catch rate with 4.0 fish/trip.

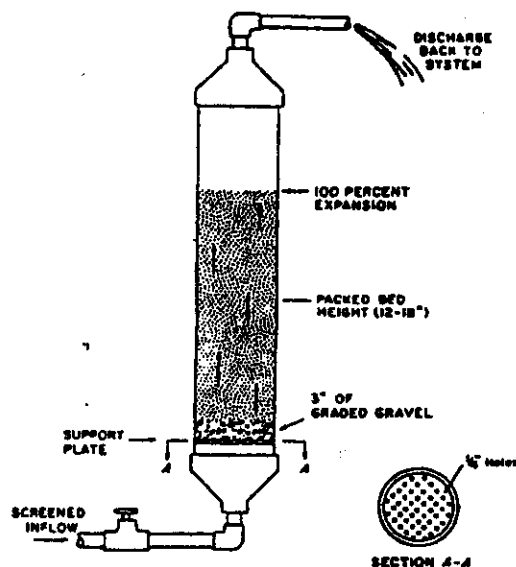
Sources: Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey, Atlantic and Gulf Coasts 1979-80, 1981-82, 1983-84, 1985, 1986.

**NEW FILTERS FOR CRAB AND CRAWFISH SHEDDERS**

The use of biological filters in soft-shell crab shedding systems is very common. Most of these systems use clam shells or limestone in them. Recently, a market has been developed for soft-shell crawfish and the technology for shedding crabs has been transferred to crawfish.

Some changes had to be made in the filter though, because crawfish must be fed. Feed and waste particles will clog up the usual clam shell filters in a short time. Dr. Ron Malone, an LSU engineer, along with Dr. Dudley Culley, an LSU fisheries biologist, has been working on testing a new filter called a fluidized bed filter.

These filters are made up of an upright tube of sand. The water from the system is pumped up through the bottom of the filter at a rate which is strong enough to float the grains of sand.



When the proper amount of water is pumped through the filter, the sand will double in the volume it occupies (100% expansion). The advantage in such a filter is that the filter can be much smaller. A cubic foot of sand in a fluidized filter can support up to 1500 crabs, compared to only about 33 crabs per cubic foot of clam shells. This is because of better oxygenation and the fact that sand particles are smaller than clam shells, and therefore, have more surface area. The bacteria that remove crab and crawfish wastes grow on this surface area.

The disadvantage to the system is that two pumps may be needed; one to push the water through the filter and one to put aerated water into the crab or crawfish tanks. Also, if the crabs are fed or if crawfish are being shed, (you have to feed crawfish) the water must be prefiltered mechanically to strain the food and waste particles from the water. There are several ways of doing this. Most crawfish shadders use several sand filters which are only partially fluidized. The use of angel-hair filter floss (like home aquariums use) may also work. Finally, since a sand filter has no clam shells to buffer the acidity of the water, one pound of baking soda for each 100 pounds of crabs should be added to the system each week.

Fluidized bed filters are presently being used by many crawfish shadders, but are still experimental as far as crab systems go. As they are perfected, more commercial interest in them will probably develop.

#### SHRIMP SEASON MEETING

The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries will be holding its annual shrimp meeting to determine the opening date of the spring brown shrimp season on April 28 at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the University of New Orleans Ballroom in New Orleans.

After department biologists give their biological predictions, the commission will take comments from the public on what date they would like to see the season opened.

#### KING OF CRABS

Louisiana has another number one ranking to the credit of its fishermen. In 1987, Louisiana passed Maryland as the leading blue crab producer. The preliminary figures have Louisiana at 44 million reported pounds, up from 32 million in 1986. The 1987 figure is approximately two million pounds above Maryland's landings. Louisiana already ranks first in the nation in production of shrimp, oysters, menhaden, crawfish and non-farmed catfish.

THE GUMBO POT  
Geva's Baked Fish

For whole or fillet: Flounder, Bass, Red Snapper, Catfish

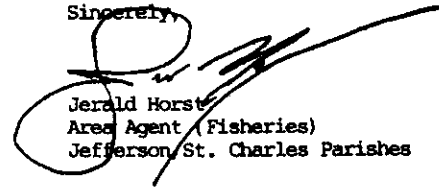
- |                                   |                              |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1/2 cup chopped green pepper      | 1 bay leaf & sprig of thyme  |
| 1/2 cup chopped onion             | 2 Tbsp. parsley (opt.)       |
| 1/2 cup chopped celery            | 1 tsp. paprika               |
| 1 clove garlic (opt.)             | 1/4 tsp. accent              |
| 1 stick butter or margarine       | 1 Tbsp. lemon juice          |
| 1 #303 can tomatoes               | 2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce |
| 2 Tbsp. flour                     | 1 tsp. salt                  |
| 1 tsp. chili powder, 1 tsp. basil | red & black pepper to taste  |

Put butter or margarine in skillet or sauce pan. Heat to frying point. Add pepper, garlic and celery. Cook until soft. Add onions and parsley. Cook until soft. Add flour and stir well. Pour in tomatoes. Cook 5 minutes. Add all other ingredients except paprika. Simmer for 10 minutes.

Rub fish with oil; salt and pepper well. Place in greased baking pan. Pour 1/4 of sauce over fish. If fish is thick, make about three slits across the fish so sauce will cook into the fish. Cook 15 minutes then add remaining sauce. Bake 15 more minutes at 400°. Sprinkle with paprika. Garnish with lemon and parsley sprigs. This recipe makes about 3 cups sauce. Enough for a 4-6 lb. fish. Serve over cooked rice or let cool and stuff small cherry tomatoes.

\*\*\*\*\*  
This month's recipe comes from Geneva Breaux of B & C Fisheries in Vacherie, LA. It's another way of enjoying fish without frying it.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Sincerely,



Jerald Horst  
Area Agent (Fisheries)  
Jefferson/St. Charles Parishes

JH/kwj

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