

# The Catfish Institute

## 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

U.S. FARM-RAISED

*Catfish*

100% AMERICAN





Dear Friends:

As 2015 came to a close, our industry had enjoyed 29 consecutive months of pond bank prices over \$1.00 per pound. Our marketing and promotional efforts are helping to drive a strong demand for U.S. Catfish products, which provides continued economic sustainability for our industry and its farmers.

Of significant importance for our industry, the USDA's Food Safety Inspection Service published its final rule. The Catfish Institute (TCI) and Catfish Farmers of America (CFA) had been working on this legislation for eight years, and we are pleased to see it come to fruition, with implementation set to begin in 2016. Also, TCI, in conjunction with CFA, spearheaded the industry's largest-ever government purchase, a total of \$20 million, under the USDA's Section 32 program.

This annual report is chock-full of TCI's programs and activities, all of which are aimed at increasing consumer awareness and sales. TCI also engaged the services of some of the nation's top research firms in an effort to better understand various consumer groups and their purchasing motivations.

TCI expanded its television and digital media into a new arena for 2015 with the advent of the Wrangler Network. Our work with ESPN, the SEC Network and local TV news outlets continued as well. We developed several major print pieces, including a 2016 calendar and a beautiful hardbound commemorative cookbook filled with 100 delicious catfish recipes.

Next year represents a significant anniversary for TCI as we celebrate 30 years of promotional activities on behalf of the U.S. Catfish industry. What began in 1986 by forward thinking farmers and feed mills continues today as a true testament to these men and their goals and vision for the future. Throughout these three decades, TCI has strived to provide the highest level of service and commitment to the marketing and success of this great industry.

Finally, we deeply appreciate those feed mills and their farmers who support TCI and its mission. A special thank you goes to the TCI Board of Directors for their unselfish involvement, insight and leadership. Our industry represents a model for other agriculture organizations throughout the United States.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger E. Barlow". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "R" and "B".

Roger E. Barlow  
President, The Catfish Institute

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harry Simmons, Jr.". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "H" and "S".

Harry Simmons, Jr.  
Chairman, The Catfish Institute

# The Catfish Institute Member Feed Mills

Alabama Catfish Feed Mill, LLC  
Uniontown, Alabama

Delta Western  
Indianola, Mississippi

Fishbelt Feeds  
Moorhead, Mississippi

## The Catfish Institute Board of Directors and Officers



*Chairman*  
**Harry Simmons, Jr.**  
Fishbelt Feeds



*Vice-Chairman*  
**David Pearce**  
Alabama Catfish  
Feed Mill, LLC



*President*  
**Roger E. Barlow**  
The Catfish Institute



*Treasurer*  
**Turner Arant**  
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**Bill Battle**  
Fishbelt Feeds



**Joey Lowery**  
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**Jonathan Mills**  
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**Joe Oglesby**  
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**Harrell Potter**  
Fishbelt Feeds



**Randy Rhodes**  
Alabama Catfish  
Feed Mill, LLC



**Solon Scott, III**  
Delta Western



**George Smelley**  
Alabama Catfish  
Feed Mill, LLC



**Jim Tackett**  
Delta Western



**Butch Wilson**  
Alabama Catfish  
Feed Mill, LLC



**Seymour Johnson**  
Director Emeritus



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The 2015 marketing year for The Catfish Institute (TCI) saw a number of new programs implemented, as well as the continuation of many successful programs from 2014 and prior years. As always, TCI's goal is to drive consumer interest and demand for U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish. We hope you will agree that the programs highlighted in this report are innovative and successful, and are worthy of your continued support.

### Television Campaign

Back in 2014, The Catfish Institute launched the industry's first major television advertising campaign. For 2015, this was expanded with the addition of four new TV spots and an all-new media network.

TCI's consumer research continues to show that family gatherings are at the core of the hearts and minds of catfish lovers, regardless of age, race, income or geographic location. Our new television spots utilize this information as we seek to influence the purchasing decisions of current and future generations.

A football-centric campaign on ESPN and the SEC Network continued from 2014 with both a larger footprint and more frequency.



The ads also continued to air in targeted markets across the South



*Cooking Up Louisiana Treasures and the Mr. Food Test Kitchen continue to be a large part of our television marketing efforts.*



during local nightly news on market-leading stations.

New for 2015 was the advent of the Wrangler Network, the new broadcast home of North America's largest rodeos. The online-only streaming TV network opened the door to millions of rodeo fans across the continent, as U.S. Catfish became a major sponsor in hopes of reaching, perhaps, the nation's most patriotic audience with our "All-American" marketing messages.

And, as you'll read about later in this report, we also maintained our national television outreach through the syndicated Mr. Food Test Kitchen® program. This show continues to thrive, reaching more than 5 million households per episode.

Finally, our relationship with Cooking Up Louisiana Treasures, a statewide television program in Louisiana, was expanded thanks to TCI's relationship with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and its Commissioner, Dr. Mike Strain, who co-hosts the program.

Cooking Up Louisiana Treasures highlights locally sourced fruits, vegetables and proteins, such as U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish. Dr. Strain and Celeste Gill, a professional chef, work



<b>SAGE SPREE</b> 2015 Alabama Catfish Farmer of the Year	<b>GREG MOYERS</b> 2015 Arkansas Catfish Farmer of the Year	<b>JON COOPER</b> 2015 Mississippi Catfish Farmer of the Year
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**FARMERS OF THE YEAR**

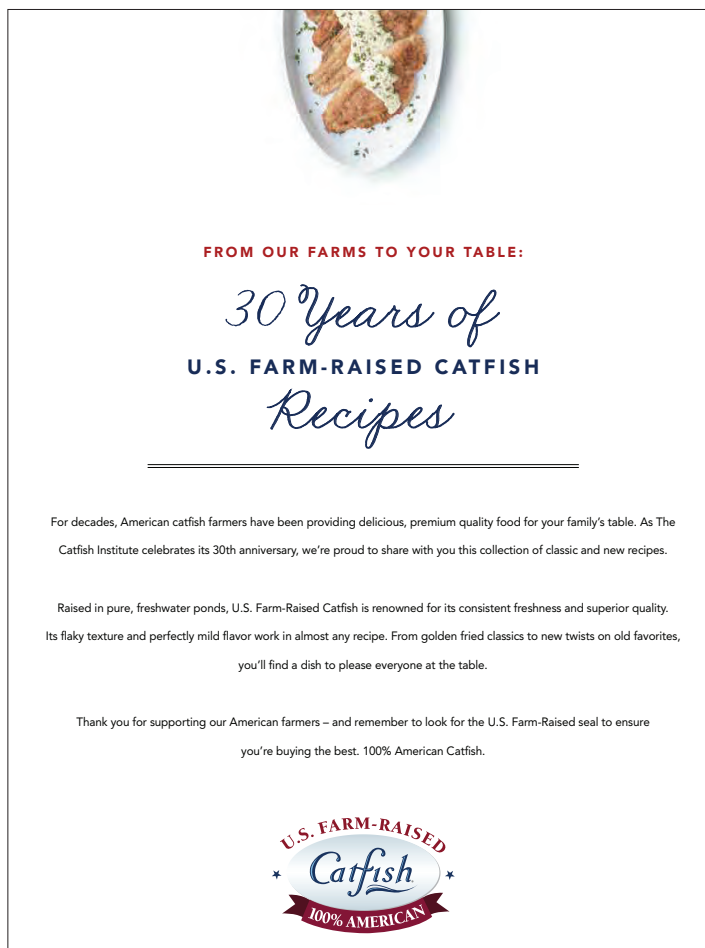
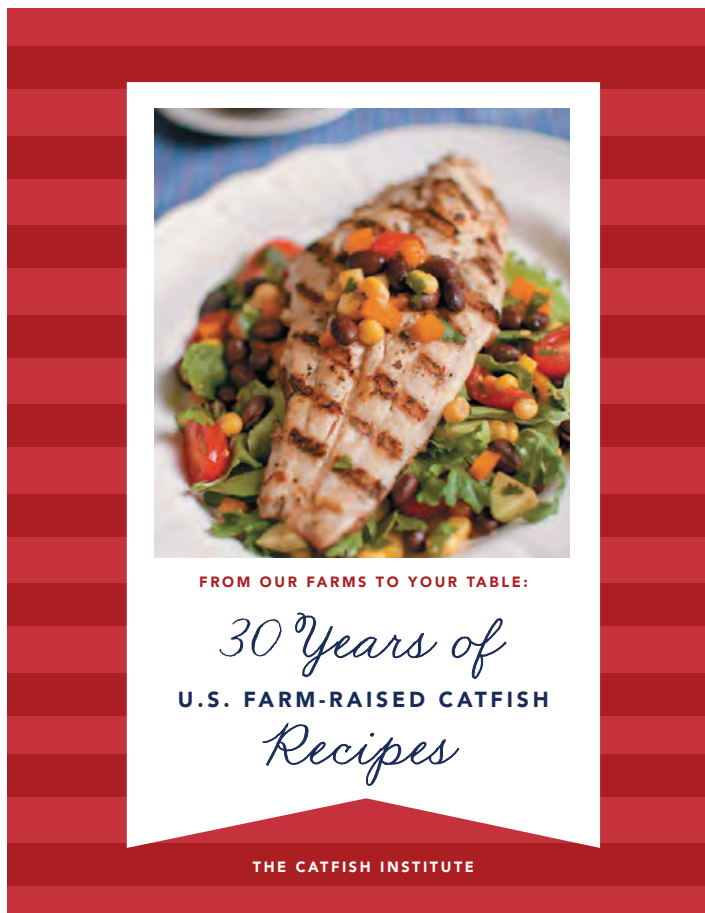
*Favorite Recipes*

together in the kitchen to offer viewers new and exciting recipe ideas for homegrown delicacies.

### Collateral Branding

TCI continues to promote the "100% American" logo tagline for all consumer marketing activities. This provides a strong sense of place and a connection to the "eat local" movement that is increasingly popular in today's consumer marketplace.

We debuted several new printed pieces this year, including our annual Catfish Farmers of the Year "Favorite Recipes" brochure. New restaurant table tents were developed with a series of industry facts, which seek to educate diners about where their food comes from and how it is raised. These have been very well received, and we hope to distribute these even more broadly in the coming year.



A new 12-month wall calendar.

This hard-bound cookbook features our 100 favorite catfish recipes.





America's largest seafood trade show—Seafood Expo North America. The annual show boasts an attendance of more than 20,000 seafood buyers, many of whom visit our booth and taste-test U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish for the first time.

The 2015 Catfish Farmers of the Year were all in attendance this year—Sage Spree of Alabama, Greg Moyers of Arkansas and Jon Cooper of Mississippi. Our team shared the



message of all-American quality, freshness and food safety, as well as extreme culinary versatility. As always, we are appreciative of the time and effort donated by our farmers who traveled to Boston to provide first-hand knowledge of the industry, while

providing a true show of force for the long-term viability and strength of U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish.

### Record-Breaking Federal Purchase

Over the past decade, TCI and Catfish Farmers of America have enjoyed great success in their joint petitions to USDA for federal purchases to assist with oversupply. These purchases use federal funds to place U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish into many different government programs, including the National School Lunch Program and the Emergency Food Assistance Program. In the face of potentially detrimental frozen inventories due to sluggish sales, these purchases help shore up pond bank prices for our farmers, which offers industry stability and better peace of mind.



*Bari Cain and Roger Barlow review the USDA purchase request.*

In 2015, our industry received its largest-ever federal purchase authorization, totaling up to \$20 million for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. These purchases will be spread across the coming months, allowing for a gradual correction in inventories and, hopefully, a long term benefit to the farmers. Over the past decade, federal purchases sought and received by TCI and CFA have reached \$45 million.

### Young Farmer Leadership Program

Now in its sixth year, the Young Farmer Leadership Program, which is co-funded by TCI and Catfish Farmers of America, brings together the next generation of catfish industry leaders for

We are particularly pleased with the creation of a new monthly recipe calendar. It offers a dozen seasonal variations of catfish dishes sure to keep consumers coming back for more!

And as we look ahead to 2016, a unique hardbound cookbook celebrating the 30th anniversary of The Catfish Institute was also created. For this treasure, we scoured through our archives of hundreds of recipes that were developed over these last three decades, narrowing them down to our 100 favorites, which are included in this commemorative book.

### Seafood Expo North America

TCI is a longtime exhibitor at North





*Young farmers record radio spots and visit Auburn University.*

two days of seminars, roundtable discussions and team building.

This year's meetings were held throughout Alabama's catfish farming region and culminated with a series of tours and presentations at the Auburn University School of Fisheries.

The connections made through the Young Farmer Leadership Program will serve these young farmers well into the future and equip them for roles as leaders of state catfish organizations, TCI, CFA and other associations in the catfish industry.

### Mail-Rebate Program

TCI's mail-in rebate program continued for a third year, thanks to a partnership with R&V Works' Cajun Cookers. This Louisiana-based manufacturer of premium deep fryers, grills and smokers includes our rebate forms in every unit sold. By providing a \$5 rebate on the



purchase of two or more pounds of U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish, TCI is able to build brand awareness for our products and open doors for new and increased product sales nationwide.

### National Catfish Month

Each year, TCI promotes August as National Catfish Month. During 2015, the marketing and public relations campaign included outreach through our social media platforms; regional radio features by TCI President Roger Barlow and the 2015 Catfish Farmers of the Year; nationally broadcast television segments; and print ads in regional publications.

The radio ads aired throughout the month on a broad network of stations across Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana and Tennessee.



TCI continued its sponsorship of the Mr. Food Test Kitchen®, a nationally syndicated cooking show targeted toward home cooks. Mr. Food airs daily in more than 130 television markets nationwide and reaches over 5.5 million viewers each day. Two new, nationally televised Mr. Food programs featuring U.S. Catfish aired during the month of August.



*Middendorfs Restaurant promoting catfish month on Cooking Up Louisiana Treasures.*

The previously mentioned Cooking Up Louisiana Treasures television program also produced a special episode for National Catfish Month. This syndicated series airs across a network of stations throughout the state of Louisiana, with additional overflow into Arkansas, Mississippi and Texas.

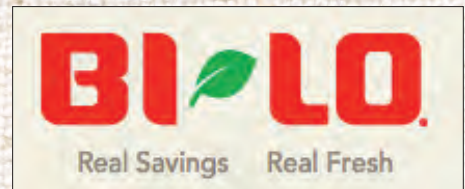
### Co-Marketing Programs

Now in its ninth year, the Partnership Program leverages the marketing dollars of TCI's member processors and state marketing organizations to further promote the U.S. Catfish industry. This program provides reimbursement for 50% of applicable marketing costs—up to a set amount per processor and per state organization, per calendar year.

These partnership dollars fund a variety of marketing programs such as billboard, television and radio advertisements; collateral materials; website development; and many other special promotions. All funding requests are reviewed by an independent committee to ensure validity and sound use of industry resources.

Another relatively new, but extremely popular and successful co-marketing initiative, known as the Sales Incentive Program, provides for consumer-





TCI promotional dollars at work across the country during 2015.





*TCI's recipe app is free and available for all smart phones and other devices.*

directed promotions in restaurant and grocery chains across the nation.

New partnerships with restaurant franchises, local catfish houses, grocery store chains and high-end, white tablecloth establishments have opened doors for our processors as they seek to drive sales and broaden markets in the face of stiff competition from cheaper imports.

## Catfish App for Smartphones and Tablets

TCI continues to promote its smartphone app, which allows catfish lovers to explore recipes, watch cooking videos and learn more about the U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish industry—all in the palm of the hand.

The app is completely free and can be found by searching "U.S. Catfish" in either the Apple App Store or on Google Play for Android devices.

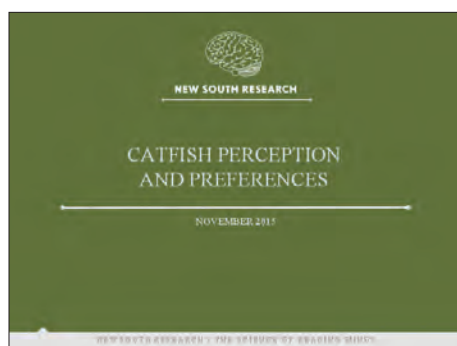
## Social Media

TCI's Facebook following grew to more than 66,000 people, with similar rates of growth occurring on our Twitter and Pinterest pages. We value the opportunity to interact directly with the public through these platforms and look forward to continuing work in these areas.



## Industry Research

Throughout the years, TCI has partnered with professional research firms in order to gain important consumer insight as to purchasing preferences, trends, flavor profiles,



*Millennial consumer research reports.*

comparisons with competing species, and so on. Two new major research projects were completed in 2015.

The first involved the next generation of catfish consumers. A national research firm based in Birmingham, Ala., was hired to explore the minds of the millennial generation, which is comprised of consumers born during the 1980s and 1990s. This demographic group is key to the future success of our industry, and as such, we have already put much of what we have learned from this research in place for current and



*Roger Barlow and Jeremy Robbins with the chefs at the Turover-Straus Group.*

## Catfish Processing – December 2015

Released January 17, 2016 by Dr. Terry Hanson, School of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Sciences, College of Agriculture, Auburn University - Funding Provided by The Catfish Institute

Note: Due to sequestration, the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) has suspended this catfish report. Dr. Terry Hanson will resume the Catfish Processing Report until further notice.

### January thru December 2015 Processing Up 1.5 Percent Over Same Period in 2014

Item-raised catfish processing during December 2015 totaled 25.1 million pounds round weight, up 2 percent from December 2014 and up 1.5 percent for the year. The average price paid to processors was \$11.5 cents per pound for "Prime" and live fish; \$10.8 pounds in December 2015, down 18 percent from last month and down 2.8 cents from a year ago. Premium round fish made up 85.6 percent of all processed fish (21.8 million lbs). The price paid per pound was \$12.1 cents for "Very Small" (1-1.5 pounds fish) and 14.4 cents for the "Very Large" (2-4 pounds fish) and live fish also made up 1.8 percent (1.8 million lbs) and 1.8 percent (1.8 million lbs) respectively, of all fish purchased from producers in December 2015. Note: the average price paid to producers includes charges for any services provided by the processing plant, such as icing and handling.

Net pounds of processed fish sold during December 2015 totaled 12.1 million pounds, an 0.8 percent from December 2014. Sales of fresh fish, at 8.97 million pounds, were up 6 percent from December 2014 and represented 81 percent of total sales. Frozen fish sales, at 3.13 million pounds, were down 2.8 percent from December 2014 and accounted for the remaining 19 percent of total fish sales. Sales of whole fish represented 24 percent of the total fish sold, fillets accounted for 57 percent, and the remaining 19 percent were unskinned, and value added products. The total December 2015 net of month inventory was 8.80 million pounds, an increase of 14.0 percent from December 2014 and up 3.7 percent from November 2015.

The total fish and frozen average price for December 2015 was \$11.44 per pound, down 19 cents from December 2014. The December 2015 average price received by processors for farm-raised fish was \$11.11 per pound, down 18 cents from December 2014. Prices for fresh fillets of all sizes were \$4.50 per pound, down 7 cents from a year ago. Total frozen fish averaged \$3.50 per pound, down 19 cents from December 2014. The price for frozen whole dressed fish was \$2.11 per pound in December 2015 which was down 7 cents from December 2014. Frozen fillets of all sizes were \$4.11 per pound, down 16 cents from December 2014.

For fresh fish, the average price received for "Prime" fillets (2 to 4 pounds) was \$4.64 per pound, for "Very Large" (2 to 4 pounds) fillets \$4.11 per pound and for "Very Small" (1 to 1.5 pounds) fillets \$4.50 per pound. Total frozen fish averaged \$3.50 per pound, down 19 cents from December 2014. The price for frozen whole dressed fish was \$2.11 per pound in December 2015 which was down 7 cents from December 2014. Frozen fillets of all sizes were \$4.11 per pound, down 16 cents from December 2014.

Imports of European, Japanese, and other catfish of the order Siluriformes in November 2015 totaled 10.4 million pounds, up 10 percent from November 2014. Imports were from China and Vietnam. The December 2015 imports totaled 10.4 million pounds and were from 10 countries: Republic of Korea and Russia. Catfish fillets totaled 99.5 thousand pounds with fresh product going to Canada, Netherlands, St. Martin, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Turks and Caicos Islands. Whole frozen product went to the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, and the Turks and Caicos Islands. Imports export data are compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau.

## Catfish Feed Deliveries – December 2015

Released January 17, 2016 by Dr. Terry Hanson, School of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Sciences, College of Agriculture, Auburn University - Funding Provided by The Catfish Institute

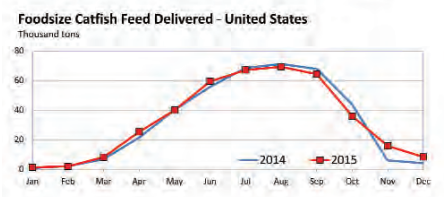
Note: Due to sequestration, the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) has suspended this catfish report. Dr. Terry Hanson is conducting the Catfish Feed Deliveries Report.

### January thru December 2015 Feed Deliveries Up 2.6 Percent Over Same 12 Month Period

Total catfish feed delivered in the United States during December 2015 was 8,714 tons for foodfish, fingerlings and broodfish size catfish. This was up 106 percent from December 2014, down 49 percent from November 2015, and up 2.6 percent for the year. Through December, cumulative foodfish feed delivered was up 2 percent from 2014 levels. Foodfish catfish feed delivered totaled 8,301 tons, up 106 percent from the December 2014 level, down 47 percent from November 2015, and up 2 percent for the year. December 2015 feed delivered for fingerlings and broodfish totaled 413 tons, up 104 percent from December 2014, down 72 percent from November 2015 and up 7 percent for the year.

December feed for foodfish catfish delivered to Mississippi catfish growers totaled 2,414 tons, up 333 percent from the December 2014 quantity, and accounted for 29 percent of the total foodfish feed delivered. Alabama's December feed delivered for foodfish catfish totaled 4,041 tons, up 69 percent from December 2014 and accounted for 49 percent of the total foodfish feed delivered to U.S. farmers this month.

Arkansas accounted for 290 tons of foodfish catfish feed deliveries, up 154 percent from December 2014, and accounted for 4 percent of all foodfish catfish feed delivered to U.S. farmers. The remaining 18 percent of foodfish catfish feed was delivered to Other States West of the Mississippi River (1,266 tons), up 48 percent from December 2014, and represented 15 percent of all foodfish feed delivered to U.S. farmers, to Other States East of the Mississippi River (283 tons), up 155 percent from December 2014, and represented 3 percent of foodfish catfish feed sales, and to Louisiana (7 tons), down 51 percent from December 2014 and represented 0.09 percent of all foodfish catfish feed sales.



*TCI-funded processing and feed delivery reports.*





*Members of the Alabama farming community join Governor Bentley for the signing of the state's new COOL law.*

future marketing plans.

In addition, another national research firm, based in Springfield, Mo., was hired to conduct catfish consumption research across the foodservice sector. This insight provided windows of opportunity for expanding our industry presence, or regaining lost ground, in influential dining establishments.

TCI's agreement with Auburn University to produce the monthly catfish processing and feed delivery reports also continued in 2015. These reports provide timely, accurate, and comprehensive data that is crucial for the success of our industry.

### **Country of Origin Labeling Laws**

Several states-including Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee-currently require restaurants

to identify the country of origin of the catfish they serve.

To make it even easier for consumers to obtain information when ordering catfish in restaurants, Alabama and Arkansas strengthened their country of origin labeling laws during the 2015 legislative session. Restaurants in each state will now have to identify the country of origin of both catfish and catfish-like species, including imported pangasius (also known as basa, tra and swai).

Based on the the Mississippi labeling law, the recently amended Alabama statute requires restaurants to identify on the menu, or in a conspicuous location, the country of origin of catfish and catfish-like species they serve. The new Alabama law went into effect August 1, 2015.

In Arkansas, similar legislation was enacted, which requires imported catfish and catfish-like species to be identified as such on restaurant menus. Upon request, a restaurant must identify the actual country of origin of catfish or catfish-like fish served. The new Arkansas law goes into effect

January 1, 2016.

These newly improved laws are a huge win for consumer safety, but they must be enforced to be truly effective. With limited staffing for frequent inspections, each state requires the public's help to have a successful law.

Please be a conscientious consumer. When you are dining at a restaurant, take note of whether catfish, or catfish-like species, are being sold. If they are not properly labeled, please call your state agency, as listed in the accompanying sidebar.

### **News Alerts**

TCI produces and distributes a bi-weekly series of "News Alerts." These informative e-mails provide industry news to not only those in the U. S. catfish industry but also policymakers at the federal level in Washington as well as at the state level; agricultural leaders across the nation; and members of both the U. S. and foreign media. Twenty-one News Alerts were distributed to over 3,000 contacts in 2015.

Many of these News Alerts were the basis for news stories that appeared in print or were discussed on radio and television segments nationwide. The benefit of these alerts is better information sharing among catfish

## **Restaurant Labeling Laws in Your State**

Please be a conscientious consumer. When dining at a restaurant, take note of whether catfish, or imported catfish-like species, are being sold. If they are not properly labeled, please contact the appropriate state agency listed below.



### **ALABAMA**

Alabama Farmers Federation,  
Rick Oates,  
800.392.5705, ext. 4305



### **ARKANSAS**

Arkansas Bureau of  
Standards,  
Tom Pugh,  
501.225.1598



### **MISSISSIPPI**

Mississippi Department of  
Agriculture and Commerce,  
Gene Robertson,  
601.359.1111



**The Catfish Institute  
News Alert**

**Seafood COOL Unaffected by WTO's Ruling on Meat Labeling**

December 30, 2015 -- The World Trade Organization (WTO) recently authorized Canada and Mexico to impose retaliatory tariffs on certain U.S. meat products in the latest chapter of a long simmering dispute over proper country of origin labeling (COOL) in the U.S. The WTO ruling -- and Congressional proposals in response -- do not affect federal and state COOL laws covering seafood such as catfish and catfish-like species, including imported pangasius, basa, tra and swai.

Ninety-two percent of Americans support country of origin labeling of all food. Nevertheless, some in Congress are calling for a repeal of COOL for certain foods specified by the Switzerland-based WTO. Earlier this year, Food and Water Watch and more than 200 other food safety, consumer, environmental, farm and public interest groups urged Congress not to repeal COOL and uphold U.S. food safety laws and regulations.


"Country-of-origin labeling is overwhelmingly popular among consumers because it provides them with important information about their food as an increasing portion of it comes from outside the United States," explained Jean Halloran, director of food policy initiatives for Consumers Union, the nation's largest consumer organization.

Ninety percent of the seafood Americans eat is imported and most comes from Asia where health and safety standards are lower than in the U.S. The FDA physically inspects about two-percent of seafood imports and only two-tenths of one percent are laboratory tested.

Consumers should always check the country of origin of seafood they purchase. U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish is reliably safe, delicious and 100 percent American grown and processed.

For more information about U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish, visit [UScatfish.com](http://UScatfish.com).

For More Information:  
The Catfish Institute  
[news@UScatfish.com](mailto:news@UScatfish.com)



**The Catfish Institute  
News Alert**

**USDA Releases Final Catfish Inspection Rule in Big Win for American Consumers**  
*Catfish Farmers of America ready to work with USDA on implementation*

December 2, 2015 -- The United States Department of Agriculture released its final rule to establish an inspection program for U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish and catfish-like imports. Sought after for years by American catfish farmers and consumer groups, the rule will ultimately require both U.S. farmers and countries exporting catfish and catfish-like products to the U.S. to meet safety standards set by the USDA.

Starting in March of 2016, both domestic catfish producers and importers will begin the process of inspection by the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service in a similar fashion to meat and poultry producers. The Catfish Farmers of America (CFA), a trade association representing America's catfish farmers, applauded the decision and will work with the USDA on implementing the new program while also reviewing the lengthy, detailed new rule.

"We applaud Secretary Vilsack and his USDA team for finally releasing this rule," CFA President Bari Cain said. "This effort has always been about food safety. After years of almost non-existent FDA inspection of imports, placing the health of consumers at risk, we are on the road to raising consumer confidence in the catfish products sold in our stores and our restaurants. We also want to express our gratitude to Sen. Thad Cochran and all of the Members of Congress who helped make this rule a reality."

The new rule finalizes the move of regulatory authority of all fish in the order of Siluriformes from the FDA to the USDA. Development of this new inspection rule was part of the 2014 Farm Bill, and implementation will begin in March of 2016. The full USDA rule [can be viewed here](#).

For more information about U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish, visit [UScatfish.com](http://UScatfish.com).

For More Information:  
The Catfish Institute  
[news@UScatfish.com](mailto:news@UScatfish.com)



**The Catfish Institute  
News Alert**

**Alabama and Arkansas Stiffen Country of Origin Labeling of Catfish-like Imports**

May 15, 2015 -- To make it easier for consumers to obtain information they need when ordering catfish in restaurants, Alabama and Arkansas have amended their country of origin labeling requirements. Soon restaurants in each state will have to identify the country of origin of both catfish and catfish-like species including imported pangasius (also known as basa, tra and swai).

The recently amended Alabama statute requires restaurants to identify on the menu, or in a conspicuous location, the country of origin of catfish and catfish-like species they serve.

The new Alabama law goes into effect August 1, 2015.

In Arkansas, similar legislation has been enacted requiring imported catfish and catfish-like species to be identified as such on restaurant menus. Upon request, a restaurant must identify the actual country of origin of catfish or catfish-like fish served.

The new Arkansas law goes into effect January 1, 2016.

Consumers and restaurants should choose safe, high quality 100 percent American grown and processed U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish. To better protect consumers, America's catfish farmers support all federal and state efforts to improve inspections of foreign imports and enhance country of origin labeling of catfish and catfish-like species.

For more information about U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish, visit [UScatfish.com](http://UScatfish.com).

For More Information:  
The Catfish Institute  
[news@UScatfish.com](mailto:news@UScatfish.com)




*The Catfish Institute provides free signage to restaurants serving only U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish.*

*TCI News Alerts are distributed bi-weekly. Sign up at [UScatfish.com](http://UScatfish.com)!*

industry constituents and better awareness of our issues in the media. With each News Alert comes a new interview opportunity and a new chance to share the story of U. S. Farm-Raised Catfish

## Issues Management

Several promising long-term trends for U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish producers and processors were revealed by issues research during 2015. Americans are becoming more aware of the importance of selecting U.S. and locally grown food over imports.

As a result, grocery stores are rapidly growing their offerings of local produce. These consumer preferences and marketing decisions are partly influenced by long-term quality problems with food imports including Asian-sourced catfish and catfish-like species. Not surprisingly, food safety groups continue urging enhanced import inspections at our borders and maintaining strong federal country of origin labeling (COOL) requirements nationwide.

Fostered in part by TCI's continuing public relations efforts, a growing number of Americans are becoming aware of the higher quality of locally produced food—including seafood—compared to imports. Consumers chose food safety as their highest priority in a recent national phone survey by the non-profit Chicago Council on Global Affairs (CGA). The CGA study and other opinion research

***If you are not currently receiving our News Alerts, please sign up at [UScatfish.com](http://UScatfish.com) by clicking the link at the bottom of the home page.***

find a growing number of Americans want to know where and how their food is produced. Most importantly, a vast majority prefer U.S. produced seafood over imports.

Supermarkets are responding to these trends. A new U.S. Department

of Agriculture (USDA) study reports they are devoting more space to locally and regionally grown foods, reflecting the popularity of local farmers markets. Overall sales of U.S. grown food increased by 30 percent between 2007 and 2012, according to a 2015 USDA Economic Research Service report to Congress.

Moreover, growing consumer demand for local food is increasingly being met by food service companies and retailers. Although growth in local farm markets appears to have leveled-off, traditional distribution chains are now meeting consumer demand.

Beyond supermarkets and food distributors, schools and other institutional meal servers are also offering more locally produced food. Last year, 42,000 schools nationwide spent about \$600 million to purchase locally produced food for their meals programs, the USDA reported. That's a 55 percent increase from two years ago, representing healthier school meals for children and new marketing opportunities for U.S. Catfish farmers.



When you look for the U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish seal,  
you're looking out for your family, and for our American farmers.

Their pure, freshwater ponds and strict standards  
ensure U.S. Catfish is the freshest, healthiest fish available.

And you can rely on that perfectly mild flavor year-round.

For recipes and more information, be sure to visit [UScatfish.com](http://UScatfish.com).



## THE CATFISH INSTITUTE

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