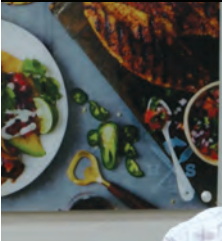


# The Catfish Institute

## 2018 ANNUAL REPORT







Dear Friends:

While the U.S. Farm Raised Catfish industry made progress toward increasing sales and regaining markets, 2018 ended with much uncertainty. The size range and the amount of the live inventory are unknown, with premium sizes being in high demand and those outside that zone being less desirable. The ability to produce what the consumer demands became apparent during the year and is vital to increasing sales and maintaining profitability.

To address this situation and to help improve stability in production, processing and sales, The Catfish Institute built on its past successes in obtaining significant USDA purchases. These are sought in conjunction with Catfish Farmers of America, and we are pleased to report record levels of catfish were sold through the government's "Buy American" program. TCI and CFA continue to expand these efforts and were awarded the industry's first ever purchase through the Food Distribution Program for Indian Reservations and is also reviewing new product options for our nation's School Lunch Program. This past fall, TCI also hosted the lead economist at the USDA's Agriculture Marketing Service for a tour of our industry.

In addition, 2018 witnessed the long-awaited foreign inspection equivalency program, by which all catfish and catfish-like species now undergo USDA-approved inspection prior to entering the United States.

The Catfish Institute continues to drive demand with traditional advertising vehicles such as television, radio, print, outdoor and events. As technology continues to evolve, new media has moved more into focus for each of the past several years, with the primary goal of reaching the next generation of catfish consumers — the millennial generation. Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube and Instagram are our primary outlets, as well as new technologies such as "geofencing," which allows TCI to blanket entire cities with mobile advertising messages.

This Annual Report highlights many of the programs undertaken by TCI during 2018. As you will see, we are constantly in search of and employing new and innovative ways to effectively market our industry's products.

Most importantly, thanks to TCI's member Feed Mills for funding these efforts.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harry Simmons, Jr." in a cursive style.

**Harry Simmons, Jr.**  
Chairman, The Catfish Institute

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger E. Barlow" in a cursive style.

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



## The Catfish Institute Member Feed Mills

Alabama Catfish Feed Mill, LLC  
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## Traditional Media

Although social media and mobile marketing continue to demand more and more of our attention and focus, some of The Catfish Institute's greatest efforts continue in the areas of traditional media, such as television, radio, print and outdoor boards.

TCI's successful television advertising campaign again incorporated a new set 30-second ads, one for each of the 2018 Catfish Farmers of the Year. These unique spots aired in targeted markets across the South, reaching our industry's core consumer groups during local nightly news on market-leading stations. This year's media buy also strongly aligned with collegiate and professional sports seasons, ensuring our messages were heard by this important consumer base.

*TCI is constantly looking into new ways of reaching the consumer, and I am continually proud of work being done on behalf of the entire industry.*

— DAVID PEARCE  
TCI Board Vice-Chairman

The Wrangler Network, the broadcast home of North America's largest rodeos, continued to expand its digital streaming footprint, presenting U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish to millions of rodeo fans across the continent.

In addition, TCI expanded its outdoor advertising in 2018, with all-new graphics and a multitude of messages appearing on both digital and traditional vinyl billboards across the South.

Nation-wide radio also continued to play a large and important role in reaching our consumers this year. A handful of TCI-sponsored ads featured the 2018 Catfish Farmers of the Year, while others used radio talent, elected officials, and others to ensure our listeners were educated about the countless reasons, and ways, to enjoy our 100% American catfish.





## Sports Marketing

TCI maintained a strong presence at major rodeo events in 2018, as U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish sponsored nearly a dozen of the South's largest and most prestigious professional rodeos. In-arena graphics, over-air mentions and other special exposure opportunities successfully drove awareness among this all-American audience.

In addition, we continued to capitalize on the nationwide obsession with collegiate football, and particularly Southeastern Conference football. TCI's outdoor, radio, television and print media were put on-task, and social media targeting technology allowed us to deliver special messages directly to fans via their mobile devices.

A new print magazine advertisement was prominently placed in the Southeastern edition of Lindy's Sports magazine, a leader in SEC athletics coverage for decades, as well as national editions of NASCAR and NFL publications.

TCI's success over the years in sports marketing leaves little doubt that the core beliefs and patriotism displayed by these fans align perfectly with those of our most devout consumers of U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish.



**BRING YOUR CLEANUP HITTER TO THE PLATE.**





## Catfish is Life

Two years ago, TCI embarked on a very unique and ambitious project with the mission of capturing the heart of our farmers, showing the world how, and why, they grow U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish.

This new video project known as “Catfish is Life” kicked-off a multi-year series to provide consumers a behind the scenes look at where their catfish comes from. Farmers and their families share their personal views and thoughts on their operations in a completely authentic, natural and totally unscripted manner.

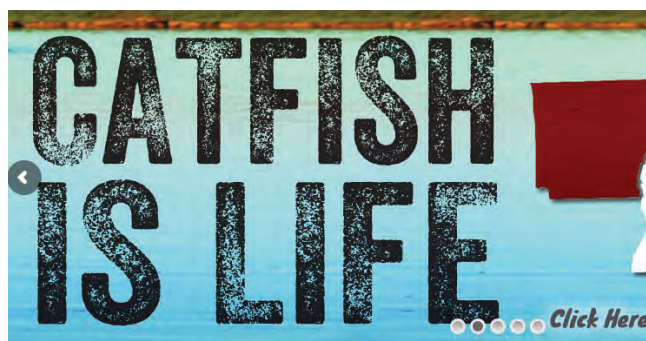
Consumers are able to get a glimpse into the real world of on-farm life, which was captured beautiful and timelessly in these short but powerful videos. We would venture to say that, aside from setting foot directly on a catfish farm, there is likely no better way to gain a sound understanding of our industry than by watching one or two of these videos.

This year’s Catfish is Life production efforts resulted in an additional 14 video features being produced, which netted TCI a total of 31 of these incredible mini-documentaries in our video archives! To view them, simply log on to our website, UScatfish.com.

The videos are also hosted on our YouTube account ([youtube.com/usfarmraisedcatfish](https://youtube.com/usfarmraisedcatfish)), which allows them to be easily shared with friends. As you watch the videos, we hope you will say a word of thanks to those farmers who were involved in this incredible project.

*This Catfish is Life video series offers the general public a real inside view into how we raise our fish, and the care and quality we place on our product. The pride and dedication shown by our industry’s farmers is heartwarming, and I’m very excited to have been a part of it.*

– BARI CAIN  
CFA Board Chairman and  
2018 Arkansas Catfish Farmer of the Year









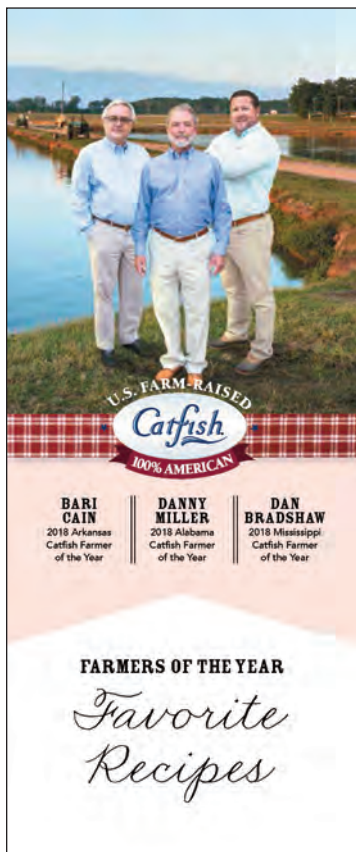
# Collateral Branding

TCI produces new and colorful printed collateral pieces each year, providing needful information to the masses, and continuing a long tradition of developing new and innovative catfish recipes to promote our industry's products.

The annual Catfish Farmers of the Year "Favorite Recipes" brochure continues to be a major hit among our audience as we seek to connect the food to the farm. It also serves as a point of pride for those who are selected each year for this honor by their state organizations.

We also produced a new edition of our very popular annual calendar project, which offers a dozen all-new seasonal variations of catfish dishes that are sure to keep consumers coming back for more!

In addition, two new recipe booklets were produced, showcasing 4 delicious recipes each, which have been extremely popular at events across the nation this year.



Coconut Catfish		Catfish Bienville		Mr. Bill's Sauteed Catfish	
					
<b>BARI CAIN</b>	<b>SERVES 6-8</b>	<b>DANNY MILLER</b>	<b>SERVES 6</b>	<b>DAN BRADSHAW</b>	<b>SERVES 6</b>
<p>2 pounds U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish Fillets, cut into 1-inch strips 2 cups all-purpose flour, divided 1/2 teaspoon baking powder 1/2 teaspoon paprika 1/2 teaspoon curry powder</p>	<p>1/2 teaspoon salt 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper 1 (12-ounce) can beer 1 (14-ounce) package sweetened flaked coconut Vegetable oil</p>	<p>6 U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish Fillets 1/2 cup butter, divided Salt and pepper to taste 4 slices bacon, diced 1 medium onion, diced 2 tablespoons garlic, minced 1 red bell pepper, diced 1 lb celery, diced 1/2 pound shrimp</p>	<p>1 1/2 cups chopped mushrooms 1/2 cup all-purpose flour 2 cups heavy cream 1 cup chicken stock 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper 1 tablespoon sherry (optional) Fresh-cut parsley for garnish</p>	<p>6 U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish Fillets 2 tablespoons butter, melted 2 tablespoons lemon juice 1 teaspoon Creole seasoning</p>	<p>4 teaspoons Greek seasoning 6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided</p>
					
<p><b>COMBINE</b> 1/2 cups flour, baking powder, paprika, curry powder, salt, cayenne pepper and beer in a large bowl. <b>DREDGE</b> catfish strips in 1/2 cup flour. <b>DIP</b> strips in beer batter and roll in coconut. <b>FRY</b> coated strips in deep, hot oil (350°F) until coconut is golden brown. <b>DRAIN</b> on paper towels. <b>PLACE</b> on serving dish with Sweet Dipping Sauce.</p>		<p><b>MELT</b> 2 tablespoons butter in a small bowl in microwave. Generously coat each fillet with salt and pepper; then brush with melted butter. <b>ADD</b> seasoned fillets, presentation side down, to a very hot cast-iron skillet, and <b>SEAR</b> to get a nice crust, approximately 1 to 2 minutes. Carefully turn and sear other side, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside. <b>PLACE</b> a large skillet over medium heat. Cook bacon until crispy. <b>REMOVE</b> bacon from pan; add remaining butter. <b>ADD</b> onions and garlic and cook for 3 minutes or until onions are translucent. Add bell pepper, celery and mushrooms; cook an additional 3 minutes. <b>ADD</b> shrimp and cook for 3 minutes. <b>DUST</b> shrimp mixture with flour and stir to coat evenly; continue to cook for 2 minutes. <b>STIR</b> in heavy cream and chicken stock; cook until sauce thickens. Add Parmesan cheese and stir to combine. <b>ADD</b> cayenne pepper and season with salt, pepper and sherry to taste. <b>SPOON</b> sauce over cooked fillets and garnish with parsley, if desired.</p>		<p><b>COMBINE</b> butter, lemon juice, seasonings and 4 tablespoons olive oil in bowl. <b>PAT</b> catfish dry and marinate in butter mixture for 30 minutes or up to 2 hours. <b>HEAT</b> a sauté or grill pan to medium heat with 2 tablespoons of olive oil. <b>PLACE</b> catfish in pan presentation side down. <b>COOK</b> for 15 minutes then flip and cook for 5 minutes more. <b>SERVE</b> with sauce of your choice or as a catfish sandwich.</p>	
<p><b>SWEET DIPPING SAUCE</b> 1 (10-ounce) jar orange marmalade 3 tablespoons prepared horseradish 3 tablespoons Creole mustard</p>		<p><b>FOR MORE RECIPES, VISIT <a href="http://USCATFISH.COM">USCATFISH.COM</a></b></p>			
<p><b>COMBINE</b> ingredients in a small bowl. May be served hot or cold.</p>					



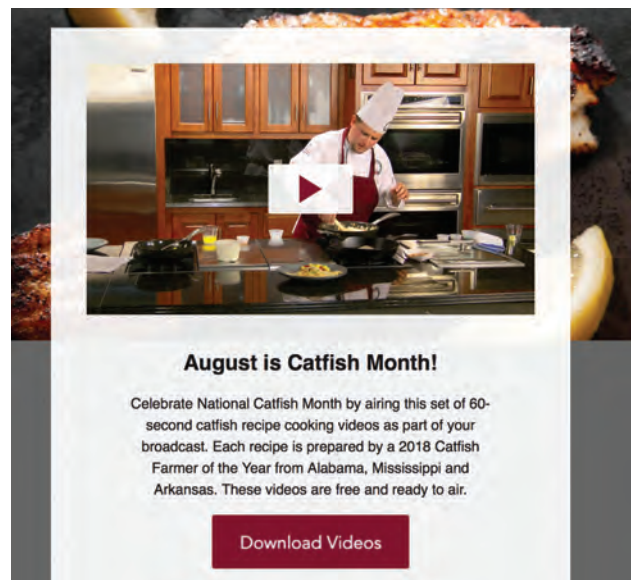
## National Catfish Month

To celebrate the importance of National Catfish Month, our August marketing, lobbying and public relations campaign undertook a broad scope of outreach through our social media platforms; regional radio features by the 2018 Catfish Farmers of the Year; television cooking segments; and print ads in regional publications. We are also pleased to share that the state of Arkansas joined our efforts this year, as Sec. of Ag. Wes Ward (pictured top-right) presented the industry with Gov. Asa Hutchinson's official proclamation designating August as "Arkansas Catfish Month."

The radio ads aired on a broad network of stations across Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee and neighboring states. These are specifically designed to build industry pride, recognize our farmers and their families, and create awareness among our most loyal consumer base.

TCI also utilized a professional media company to develop and distribute a series of video news releases for National Catfish Month 2018. These video segments featured a professional chef demonstrating the preparation of the favorite recipes submitted by our industry's 2018 Catfish Farmers of the Year. After being produced, they were then promoted and distributed to television news producers across the nation. Often used as "filler programming" during slow news days, these videos are an excellent method of gaining low-cost, high-impact media coverage for our industry.

Special messages for National Catfish Month were also developed and deployed on TCI's many social media platforms. We take advantage of the month of August in particular to strengthen our industry's farm-to-table connections in the minds of our consumers. We value the opportunity to interact directly with the public through these platforms, particularly during National Catfish Month, and look forward to continuing work in these areas.





## Social Media

Through the power of Social Media, The Catfish Institute is able to reach more consumers, of all ages, than ever before. User preferences change faster in the genre than anywhere, so our team works diligently to adjust our tactics to make the greatest impact.

Thanks to carefully targeted outreach and timely posts throughout the year, TCI's online following continues to grow at impressive rates across all of our platforms – Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Pinterest.

We value the opportunity to interact directly with the public through these platforms, particularly during National Catfish Month, and look forward to continuing work in these areas.

New technologies also allow us to reach consumers with pinpoint accuracy. A test of some of these new opportunities was conducted this fall in Austin, TX.

The Austin Campaign was a December 2018 digital-only campaign aimed at reaching this key foodie market with messages about U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish as a great dish for holiday entertaining.

The audience was divided into two groups: our traditional catfish consumer and our key millennial audience. During the month, we reached our audience over 3.6 million times through video, display, social media, search and Pandora digital radio (all on our consumers' mobile devices) with messages about holiday entertaining.

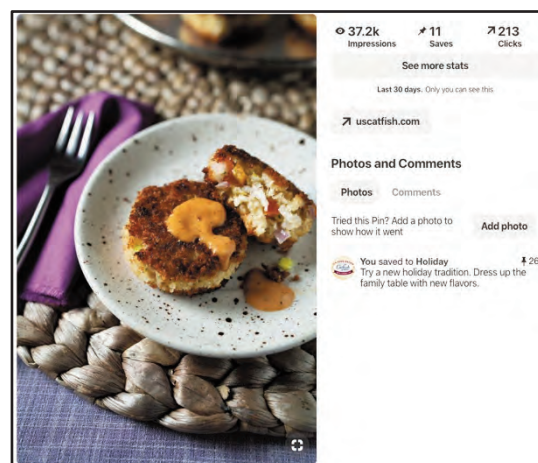
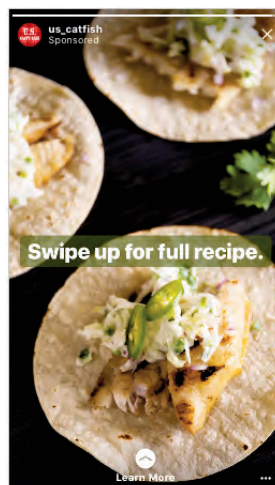
With social media, we launched Facebook



and Instagram, along with Pinterest. We saw Pinterest, a new paid social channel for us, perform on-par with Facebook. As we focused not only on those looking for catfish or fish recipes, but holiday entertaining, the search campaign proved that this strategy was effective.

Pandora radio was also a new tactic, delivering the TCI holiday-focused radio spots 236,454 times in the Austin area to our key audiences.

We look forward to employing these new digital marketing techniques more broadly in the coming year!





## Seafood Expo North America

The Catfish Institute is a longtime exhibitor at Seafood Expo North America — our nation's largest and most prestigious seafood trade show. This annual show boasts an attendance of well over 20,000 seafood buyers, many of whom visit our booth and taste-test delicious U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish.

The decade-long tradition of showcasing the annual Catfish Farmers of the Year was once again a crowd pleaser, and we want to thank our 2018 farmers for their participation in cooking and telling the story of the U.S. Catfish industry: Danny Miller of Greensboro, Ala.; Bari Cain of McCrory, Ark.; and Dan Bradshaw of Yazoo City, Miss.

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.





## Co-Marketing Programs

Building on the past decade of success, the TCI Partnership Program continues to leverage 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, throughout the 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 extremely successful co-marketing initiative, the Sales Incentive Program, leverages processor relationships to fund extremely valuable consumer-directed promotions in restaurant and grocery chains across the nation.

Creating these new partnerships with restaurant companies, local catfish houses, grocery store operators and high-end, white tablecloth establishments continue to open new doors for our processors as they seek to drive sales and broaden markets in the face of stiff competition from a diverse global seafood market.

TCI's mail-in rebate program is in its fourth 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 offers in every unit sold.

*TCI's cooperative program allows us to leverage opportunities to reach more of the public while reinforcing the U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish seal. Utilizing these funds to work in partnership with large, national restaurant and grocery chains has certainly extended the reach and recognition of our industry's products.*

– JONATHAN MILLS  
TCI Board Treasurer





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**Fresh  
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CONTINUOUS WITH YOUR CHOICE OF 2 REGULAR SIZES & HUSH PUPPIES  
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Fresh  
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with french fries, hush puppies  
and garlic toast.

ONLY **\$14.99**

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SEAFOOD  
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WHERE EVERYTHING IS A DISCOVERY



**MISSISSIPPI STATE ATHLETICS** with Simmons Catfish.  
August 28 at 5:30 PM • Paid •

Hey, MSU fans! Stop by the Veranda throughout this football season and enjoy the "Catfish Dish of the Week" presented by Simmons Catfish. Each Thursday night we kick off a new recipe during Dawg Talk with Neil Price and Coach Moorhead. Make tonight a catfish feast with one of these delicious recipes: <http://simmons-catfish.com/recipes.html>



**CATFISH DISH OF THE WEEK**

PRESENTED BY  
**SIMMONS**  
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## Young Farmer Leadership Program

Now in its eighth 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 two days of seminars, roundtable discussions and team building.

This year's meetings were held in Washington, D.C., in concert with the annual industry fish fry. Our group of 22 farmers met with their elected officials, as well as with the administrations of the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service and the USDA Agriculture Marketing Service.

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.

*The importance of the Young Farmer Program cannot be underestimated. It is a vital tool for connecting the next generation of catfish farmers and educating them on the issues and challenges they will face.*

– TOWNSEND KYSER  
CFA President and founding member of the  
TCI-CFA Young Farmer program







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