

THE CONCENTRATION OF CATFISH CULTURE

An Abstract of a Thesis
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ABSTRACT

Although practiced in China 3,000 years ago, fish culture is relatively new to the United States. The commercial production of catfish has become important only during the last ten years. Catfish are primarily raised in leveed open ponds which are concentrated in the Mississippi alluvial valley in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

The purpose of this study is to determine how the industry became so concentrated, and to predict its future. Nine factors found to be necessary to open pond catfish culture are examined in relation to the region. These are temperature, topography, water, soil, capital, feed, processing, market, and technical proficiency. The study reveals that technical knowledge provided fish farmers by the federal government could be the determining locational factor. The Negro market could have been a beginning influence; although, along with temperature, topography, water, and soil, it is not unique to the region. Capital, feed, and processing have had no locational significance. It is predicted that the industry will remain where it is, and that the catfish industry will provide the beginning of other aquacultural ventures in the United States.