

# LOUISIANA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

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## SEA GRANT PROGRAM



Dear Friends:

### LAGNIAPPE

I've been promising to put out a newsletter for several months now and this is finally it. This newsletter is a way of extending information to people concerned with the seafood industry. I hope to; include subjects of interest to all segments of this important industry. I am planning to send out the LAGNIAPPE every other month at the present time and it will be free of charge. I would appreciate any suggestions on articles for it and comments on the newsletter. I can be reached at the above addresses on the letterhead so feel free to call or write me any time.

I am presently trying to get a mailing list together, so tell your friends about the newsletter and how to get it.

### GILL NET HEARING

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission will be holding the last of five public hearings on the current gill net controversy at 7:00 P.M. on March 28 at the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission Building at 400 Royal St. in New Orleans. It is very important that all people concerned with the future of our fish resources attend this meeting. The Commission is interested in hearing from both sport and commercial fishermen. At the public hearing in Baton Rouge, 33 sport-fishermen made statements and only one commercial fisherman spoke. This does not give a balanced viewpoint, so all interested people should attend and make their viewpoints heard.

### COLORED OYSTERS

Have you ever opened an oyster that has an unusual color? There are many reasons for oysters which have unusually colored meats. Here are some of the more common colors and their causes.

Green Gills - This is caused by the depositing of chlorophyll from the tiny plant life that the oyster uses as food.

Green Oysters - Many oysters will concentrate copper in their bodies giving them a green color.

Red Oysters - 1) Pink yeasts will sometimes give oysters and their liquid a pink color. This yeast growth results from unsanitary conditions in the processing plant or on the boat harvesting them. 2) Sometimes a bacteria Serratia marcescens with a red pigment will multiply and cause a red color. This bacteria is rarely observed. 3) A small crab called the pea crab is sometimes found inside oysters. The ovaries of this crab contains a red pigment which can leak out and cause a pink color.

4) The most common cause of red colored oysters is a microscopic dinoflagellate which the oysters have been consuming in recent years. If the oyster is cut during shucking or damaged during freezing and thawing the red pigment will leak out and discolor the oyster liquor. This color can be destroyed by heating to 120°F degrees. This red color has no relation to the very poisonous red tide. These red pigmented oysters are safe for human consumption. 5) Brown spots - Oysters in the South will develop brown spots due to biochemical reactions. This is normal for these oysters and not harmful.

#### INSULATION CAN SAVE MONEY

Recently researchers in North Carolina made a study on different types of insulation for the holds of fishing boats. They recommended sprayed in-place polyurethane foam as the best insulation to install in older as well as newer vessels. Tests showed that boats using this type of insulation used almost 33% less ice per 100 pounds of shrimp than boats with block styrofoam insulation and 67% less ice than uninsulated boats used. Since ice can be an important factor in operating a fishing boat, this represents substantial savings. Proper insulation of fishing boats will benefit seafood buyers also, especially shrimp buyers, whose biggest complaint is the quality of incoming shrimp. In addition to the savings on ice, shrimp fishermen using this polyurethane foam report bigger earnings because the shrimp retain their weight better due to quick chilling and run 10-15% heavier. Other advantages listed for polyurethane foam are 1) Ease of insulation; 2) It can cover areas impossible to reach with other types of insulation; 3) It increases structural strength of the vessel. Source: Angel, N.B. 1972. Seagrant publication UNC-SG-72-05.

#### CATFISH ARE BIG BUSINESS

The final landing figures are in for freshwater catfish landings and imports in 1976. Approximately 108 million pounds of catfish were produced. Of this total 10 million pounds were imported, mostly from Brazil. The rest was divided between wild catfish (36 million pounds) and farm-raised catfish which totaled 62 million pounds. Freshwater catfish accounted for 4% of all human food fish landed in the United States. The average price paid to the catfish farmer for his catfish was almost 53 cents per pound. Source: Ayers, J.W. National Marine Fisheries Service

#### MARKET FOR TRASH FISH

One of the most common problems I hear about as I move about the area is the one of not being able to utilize the trash fish caught in trawls. A new plant, which is the first of its kind in North America, is being built by Louisiana Marine Protein (LMPI). This plant could be the beginning of an important new industry in Louisiana and will process only trash fish like those brought up in shrimp trawls. It will be located at Port Fourchon at the mouth of Bayou Lafourche. The plant is expected to use up to 150 tons of fish daily and will provide more than \$2,000,000 in extra income to fishermen. It will be interesting to watch the success of this operation as it may be practical in this area also.

#### SEAFOOD TECHNOLOGIST ON STAFF

We now have a full time seafood technologist work with the Extension Service. His name is Dr. Mike Moody and he will be working with all phases of the seafood industry from the boat to the table. Dr. Moody is an expert on F.D.A. regulations on seafood processing and EPA discharge regulations. He is available to tour your operations and make suggestions on the efficiency of your plant and your compliance of Federal regulations, regardless of the size of your operation. Dr. Moody worked for F.D.A. before coming to the Extension Service and therefore is aware of how Federal administrations work and what to expect from them. His services are free and if you would like to meet Dr. Moody or have some problem that he

may help you with, call me or drop me a line and we'll arrange it.

#### INVESTMENT TAX CREDIT

Congress has tried to stimulate the economy by giving businesses a special deduction benefit. Commercial fishermen can use this investment tax credit program and save substantial amounts on their taxes. On items used in your commercial fishing which have an expected life of 7 years or more you can take 10% of the value of this item directly off of your tax bill itself rather than through depreciation. Because the investment tax credits are subtracted directly from your tax bill each dollar of investment tax credit is much more valuable to you than each dollar of depreciation. Smaller investment tax credits are available for gear with expected lives of less than 7 years also. If you were not aware of this program you are allowed to go back three years to gain the credits from those years.

#### WORMS IN FISH

One question which seems to come up often is about the long and stringy "spaghetti worms" found in the flesh of speckled and white trout, redfish, drum and croaker. These worms are often found when filleting fish and while they are quite unappetizing they are no threat to human health. These worms are immature tapeworms which will reach maturity in the gut of a shark when the infected trout is eaten by a shark. Cooking or freezing usually kills any worms present but even if eaten alive by humans they would not be likely to survive.

Source: Johnson, Ken. January, February 1977. Texas Trawler.

#### CHANGES IN CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION FUND

Changes in the Capitol Construction Fund (CCF) tax-deferral program were made in October of 1976. This change allows more fishermen to use the program as it drops the minimum size of the vessel from 5 net tons to 2 net tons. Under the C.C.F. act, through the National Marine Fisheries Service, fishermen to defer payment of some Federal taxes for constructing and reconstructing fishing vessels. In effect the fisherman has obtained an interest free loan from the Federal Government to improve his equipment.

The National Marine Fisheries Service also has a Fishing Vessel Obligation Guarantee. This is a guarantee by the N.M.F.S. on behalf of a fisherman, guaranteeing to his lender that a loan will be repaid on vessels of 5 tons net or more. The purpose of the obligation guarantee is to help fishermen get loans which (1) finance portions of costs of large investments, (2) to get reasonable interest rates and (3) to get loans which can be repaid over a long enough period of time to allow a fisherman afford the loan.

#### CHECK YOUR WOODEN HULL BOAT FOR DECAY

Decay or rotting of wood is a real problem in wooden hull boats. Often the damage can be quite serious before it is noticed unless one knows what to look for. There are five basic ways to detect decay. 1) Discolored paint or cupping (indents) on the wood surface may indicate decay. (2) Sounding with a hammer produces a dull sound in infected wood. This is very useful to find wood with decayed insides. (3) A sharp ice pick penetrates decayed wood rather easily. Wood splintered off will tend to break in short pieces if it is going bad instead of in long splinters like good wood. (4) Decayed wood is brittle when dry and breaks easily across the grain. (5) Drilled holes are best for inspecting large timbers. Drill holes 3/8 inch in diameter not more than one-fourth of the way through the timber. How easily the drill penetrates and the condition of the chips will indicate the condition of the wood.

Plug inspection holes with tight-fitting wooden dowels which have been soaked in wood preservative. Coat with marine glue before driving the dowels in.  
 Source: Condon, E.J., Graham, R.D. 1975. Decay and Its Prevention Oregon State University Extension Service.

THE LATEST ON THE EEL DEAL

Several months ago certain fishermen expressed a great deal of interest in the possibility of fishing commercially for freshwater eels. Since that time we have been checking into this possibility and the results seem to be encouraging. Near the end of March a large buyer of freshwater eels will be coming to the New Orleans area to check into the possibility of buying eels. The prices mentioned now are between 40-50 cents per pound. It appears that there is quite a demand for these fish "up north" since he is willing to send trucks down to pick up all we can produce. Test sets of eel traps in our area to check out the population have yielded between 1 and 150 pounds per trap. Further checking will have to be done to determine where the eels are concentrated and the best times, tides and salinities to fish in. I do have a limited number of publications concerning commercial fishing for eels at my office in Gretna.

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

Life begins at 40F: How to use a seafood-handler's thermometer  
 W.D. Davidson, S.G. No 32. Oregon State University Extension Service, Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program. Oregon State University Corvallis, Oregon, 97331

Cleaning & Sanitizing Agents for seafood processing plants.  
 j.Lee S.G. No 21. Oregon State University Extension Service, Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program. Same address as above.

Technical operations manual for the blue crab industry. 1974.  
 T.M. Miller, N.B. Webb, F.B. Thomas. UNC-SG074-12. UNC Sea Grant Program. 1235 Burlington Laboratories, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina, 27607

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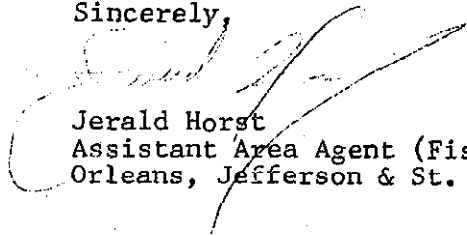
THE GUMBO POT

Shrimp au Gratin

3/4 lb. cooked shrimp	Dash of pepper
3 tbsp chopped onion	1 1/2 cups milk
3 tbsp butter, melted	1 cup grated cheese (Velveeta)
1/2 cup flour	1 tbsp butter melted
1/2 tsp salt	1/2 cup dry bread crumbs
1/2 tsp dry mustard	

Cut large shrimp in half. Cook onion in butter until tender; blend in flour and seasonings. Add milk gradually and cook until thick, stirring constantly. Add 3/4 cup of cheese and heat till melted. Stir in shrimp and pour into well-greased casserole. Combine butter, crumbs and remaining cheese: sprinkle over top of casserole. Bake in 400 degree oven for 10 minutes or until brown. Serves 6.

Sincerely,



Jerald Horst  
 Assistant Area Agent (Fisheries)  
 Orleans, Jefferson & St. Bernard