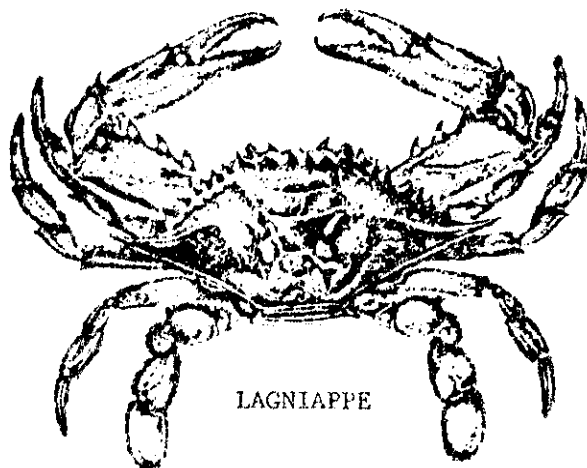


LOUISIANA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Orleans Parish
St. Charles Parish
Jefferson Parish

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SEA GRANT PROGRAM



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SOFTSHELL CRAB PRODUCTION WORKSHOP

In recent years, two things have changed in the softshell crab industry. First a lot more people are interested in shedding crabs and second a lot of waters near fishermen's operations have gotten so bad that shedding in float cars is almost impossible.

With these changes, a lot of fishermen have been looking long and hard at some sort of a closed system to shed crabs which recirculates and filters the same water over and over.

While these systems work well, a fisherman must set them up right and operate them correctly. A workshop in Lacombe, La. (on the North shore of Lake Ponchartrain) is being planned to give people interested a closed-system crab shedding operation this information.

The workshop will be conducted on Saturday, May 21. The morning session will be devoted to technical information on the system. The afternoon program will be a tour of the research closed system at the fish hatchery and a tour and discussion of Cultus Pearson's working closed system. Pearson's system is one of the finest of its kind anywhere in the country.

After four o'clock, there will be a short technical session for scientists and marine advisory personnel.

Anyone interested in this program MUST register for attendance in advance. The registration forms were not ready at the time this news-letter went to press, but if you are interested in attending, call or write my office and I will send you a registration form.

There is a \$10 registration fee which will pay for conference materials and lunch. Anyone flying in from out of town can catch an LSU bus at the Airport Hilton, just outside the Greater New Orleans Airport gates. There is a \$10 bus fee.

The program is coordinated by Harriet Perry of the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory and jointly sponsored by the Louisiana Sea Grant College Program, the Mississippi/Alabama Sea Grant Consortium and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries.

SHRIMP SEASON HEARING

The Department of Wildlife & Fisheries will be holding its annual spring meeting to get public comment on the opening date for the brown shrimp season, on Monday, April 25, 1983. The meeting will be at the Airport Hilton in Kenner, La. and will begin at 10 a.m.

At this same meeting, Department biologists will give the outlook for this year's brown shrimp production. The dates of the opening will be announced the next day at 10 a.m. also at the Airport Hilton.

CRAB TRAP PAINT

Last fall, the Extension Service conducted several demonstrations with the new anti-fouling crab trap paint containing Bis(tributyltin) oxide. Since that time we have gotten really excellent reports back from the fishermen who have tried it.

Several have said that it cuts the growth of "hair" down to nothing. One fisherman from Irish Bayou left several painted and unpainted traps out from August to March as a test. He reported that the traps without the paint looked like a giant ball of fuzz and the painted traps only had a few baracles on them.

I've had several calls this spring from fishermen looking for a place to buy the paint. After contacting the only manufacturers of this type of paint, I found only three places in the area that handle it.

Alario Bros. Hardware & Fishing Supplies
894 Avenue A, Westwego, La. 70094
(504) 341-1843

Marinovich Trawl Co. Inc.
1317 East First St. Biloxi, Miss. 39533
(601) 436-6429

Smackie Seafood
Star Route B, Box 429 A, Franklin, La. 70538
(318) 364-2456

The paint is only manufactured by U.S. Yacht Paint Co. right now. A five gallon can costs about \$110 and will coat about 100 traps. It is cut by 3 or 4 parts Naptha thinner to one part paint. The thinner is sold seperately.

CRAWFISH — THEN AND NOW

Crawfish —catching, cooking and eating them — has become a real big business in the last 25 years. Both the wild crop from the Atchafalaya Basin (spillway) and the farm-raised crop have grown over the years. Of course prices have also changes. In a "Louisiana Conservationist" article in 1966, the Atchafalaya Basin harvest was estimated to be 2 million pounds in a good year. Present production in a good year is estimated to be over 25 million pounds of wild spillway crawfish.

The same article mentioned that crawfish prices dropped to 6¢ per pound in the 1964-65 season. Normally the price "only" dropped to 12 or 15 cents a pound, the article stated, from a season opening high price of 35-50 cents. Present day prices, as most of you know, are two to three times as high as they were then.

Crawfish farming has also increased tremendously. The figures below will give you some idea of the increase in acreage in crawfish production.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres in Crawfish</u>
1949	40
1960	2,000
1966	6,000
1968	10,000
1969	12,000
1970	18,000
1971	24,000
1973	44,000
1975	45,000
1979	60,000
1981	70,000
1982	90,000
1983	100,000?

• At 100 pounds of crawfish per acre, that's a possible 10 million pounds of crawfish. At 500 pounds an acre, which is easily possible with decent management on good locations, (which obviously not all 100,000 acres have) that's a possible 50 million pounds of farm-raised production alone. That's a lot of mudbugs!

SEAFOOD RETAILERS—TREAT PRODUCT WITH T.L.C.

T.L.C. stands for "Tender Loving Care". There is an old saying about a person not being able to see the forest because the trees are in the way. Sometimes those of us that handle and see a lot of seafood never stop, stand back and see how we are handling the product.

Seafood is at its absolute best when its first lifted from the water. From that moment, it's all downhill. It can either loose its quality rapidly or slowly. That part is up to you. How fast it loses quality is directly related to: 1) How clean it and you are, 2) How cold it is kept, and 3) How long you keep it.

While you may have a great deal of experience in handling seafood, going down the list below may back up what you are now doing or even give you some new ideas. Remember, the better seafood you sell, the more seafood you sell.

- 1) Buy the best quality seafood available. It may cost a little more, but if you have to throw some away because it spoiled, it wasn't really a bargain.
- 2) Within reason, try to get your suppliers to make more frequent, smaller deliveries rather than one large delivery. This is especially true of live product like crawfish and crabs.
- 3) Wash your seafood products in plain water. A simple washing does more to remove spoilage bacteria than any other thing you can do.
- 4) Ice seafood properly. Ice is always less expensive than product, so use plenty and remember that each individual fish should be surrounded by ice. Use ice even when the seafood is stored in a cooler.
- 5) Rotate product properly. Live by the saying "first in, first out". This will help avoid having to discard poor quality product and prevent losses.
- 6) Use a thermometer. Never allow frozen products to rise above 0°F. Best of all, the storage temperature should be -15°F. Fresh product should not be allowed to rise above 33°F during storage or above 35°F during display in the display counter. This is why you ice the product even in a cooler and can be checked with a hand thermometer.
- 7) Test frozen products before selling. This is especially true when handling a new product or working with a new supplier. The best way to do this is heat a thawed sample in a boil-in-the-bag pouch. This allows you to smell any off odors in the product when you open the pouch.
- 8) Keep work area clean. Wash and sanitize all food contact areas after each use and no less than every four hours. The number of bacteria on a cutting board can increase to 4,096 times their original number in just 4 hours. Wash equipment and surfaces with hot water and detergent to remove blood, slime, pieces of flesh and dirt. Then sanitize with a chlorine solution, at a concentration of 200 parts per million. Chlorine does not work well if the area to be cleaned is dirty, so wash it first. Rinse the chlorine off after 5-10 minutes, and let them air dry. Air will not contaminate equipment unless it contains dust or moisture droplets.
- 9) Keep yourself clean. While many bacteria can make seafood spoil, those spread by people can be dangerous. Employees should wash their hands frequently, especially before beginning work, after breaks, after visiting the toilet, after touching one's face, mouth, nose or hair and after working with other kinds of food product. Clothes should also be kept clean and dirty aprons changed frequently

These may sound like a lot of rules, but they rapidly become everyday good habits. Remember—A good retail market never smells fishy.

24-HOUR POLLUTION HOT LINE

The Louisiana Department of Natural Resources has announced a toll-free statewide hot line at 1-800-535-8763 where citizens can report water and air pollution and waste dumping.

The hot line will be manned 24 hours a day to take reports of pollution and answer questions about the state's environmental programs.

You might want to save this number since many fishermen have called me in the past to find out where to report these problems.

FISHING IN PRIVATE CANALS

A question that has been asked of me quite a few times over the years concerns the rights of land owners to post or prevent the use of canals. Mike Wascom, the LSU Sea Grant attorney has done some research on the subject and here are his findings.

Under Louisiana law, the owner or leaseholder of a navigable canal privately dug on his property can post or keep the public from using the canal, with two possible exceptions:

- 1) If the landowner or leaseholder has not posted the canal or blocked the public from using the canal for a 30 year period, the public gets a servitude or right to use the canal.
- 2) If the private canal has destroyed the "navigability" of surrounding natural waterbodies so that the canal has substituted itself for those natural waters, then the public has the right to use the private canal as a substitute for those waters. This could happen if the canal would capture most of the water flow from the natural bayou and the old bayou then becomes silted up or covered with floatant.

Keeping in mind that while the courts have ruled this way in the past and set legal precedents, each future case will still probably involve time and money in going to court.

THE GUMBO POT

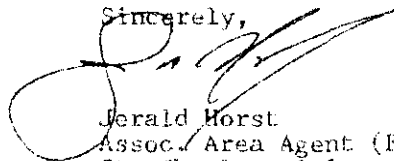
Last month while visiting Frank and Brenda Tullos at Frank's Riverside Seafood, Brenda whipped this dish up for lunch. It was quite good, so naturally I twisted her arm to give me the recipe. Be sure you have lots of French bread to sup up the juices.

Shrimp Brenda

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 3 lbs. medium-large shrimp | 1 stick butter |
| 1 bunch shallots, cut up | 2 tbsp. olive oil |
| 5-6 toes garlic chopped fine | paprika |
| 1½ lbs. mushrooms, sliced | salt and pepper |

Clean shrimp. Melt butter, add oil and saute garlic. Add shrimp and cover. Cook over medium low heat until done, 12 to 15 minutes. Add mushrooms and shallots and sprinkle paprika for color. Salt and pepper to taste. Cook until mushrooms and shallots are tender, 5 to 10 minutes. Serve with hot French bread. Serves 4.

Sincerely,



Jerald Horst
Assoc. Area Agent (Fisheries)
St. Charles, Orleans, Jefferson