



Louisiana State University

## **Agricultural Center**

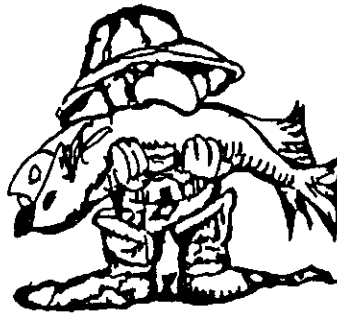
Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service

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## **SEA GRANT PROGRAM**



## **LAGNIAPPE**

### **NEW FISHERIES LAWS**

The following bills were passed by the Regular Session of the 1997 Louisiana Legislature and will go into effect August 15 (unless otherwise noted). If you would like more information on these new laws, call me at my office in Marrero.

#### Senate Bill 147 - Bean (Act 866)

Provides that restaurants and retail grocers who only buy fish from licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealers and only sell such fish cooked to be eaten at the establishment do not have to buy a wholesale/retail dealer's license. Records must be kept, however.

#### Senate Bill 264 - Ullo (Act 666)

Creates the Underwater Obstruction Removal Program within the Department of Natural Resources. The program is effective until July 1, 1999.

#### Senate Bill 270 - Ullo & Robichaux (Act 871)

Requires the spring brown shrimp season in the inshore waters between South Pass of the Mississippi River and the western shore of Vermilion Bay and Southwest Pass

at Marsh Island (the area usually opened as Zone 2) to open no later than the third Monday in May during 1998 and 1999. This is to serve as a trial period for the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to review. Effective May 15, 1998.

Senate Bill 362 - Green (Act 874)

Adds the parishes of West Baton Rouge, Pointe Coupee, Assumption, and Iberville to the area where the commercial harvest of bowfin (choupique) is allowed with nets.

Senate Bill 509 - Romero (Act 21)

Changes provisions that allow parish governments to create local game and fish commissions so as to allow for any number of commission members. Requires that rules and regulations proposed by such a parish commission must be approved and adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission. Abolishes the Spanish Lake Game and Fish Commission as a state agency and allows parish government to re-create it locally.

Senate Bill 524 - Robichaux (Act 202)

Prohibits the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries from enforcing any federal laws or making any state rules and regulations requiring the use of fish excluder devices by commercial fishermen, unless authorized to do so by the legislature.

Senate Bill 534 - Hainkel & others (Act 1233)

Changes the definition of "underutilized species" to include any species, not just edible ones, that have commercial development potential which has not been fully reached.

Senate Bill 542 - Hainkel & others (Act 1236)

Repeals the 7 day nonresident basic recreational fishing license. Increases the fee for the 3 day basic nonresident license from \$10 to \$20.

Senate Bill 544 - Hainkel & others (Act 203)

Repeals the requirement for a \$55 commercial eel fishing license and allows fishing for eels under the commercial fisherman's and appropriate gear licenses.

Senate Bill 546 - Hainkel & others (Act 1237)

Makes changes in wording describing fish farms on **privately owned property** so that the water bodies' structures do not have to be built of earth. Provides that the laws concerning fish farms do not apply to the waters of the Atchafalaya Basin.

Senate Bill 548 - Hainkel & others (Act 1238)

Provides that any person possessing twice or more the percentage allowed of undersized crabs shall suffer a class 4 violation **and** the following penalties: 1st offense, loss of gear license for 6 months; 2nd offense within 5 years, loss of license for 12 months; 3rd offense within 5 years, loss of license permanently. Anyone who crabs

**without** a crab trap gear license during their period of suspension shall have a class 6 violation and may never again apply for a crab trap gear license. Dealers do not receive a violation if the fishermen who harvested and sold the crabs can be identified.

Senate Bill 549 - Hainkel & others (Act 670)

Provides that as a condition for getting wholesale, retail, or transportation licenses that all fish possessed on the licensed property or vehicle are considered commercial.

Senate Bill 550 - Hainkel & others (Act 191)

Requires that the **buyer or handler** of farm-raised fish instead of the producer is responsible for reporting the arrival of these fish into the state.

Senate Bill 551 - Hainkel & others (Act 205)

Includes drying, cooking for immediate consumption, and packing or packaging of alligators or parts, in the definition of seafood processing. Removes deheading, freezing, and simple packing of fresh fish in a sack, bag, package, crate, box, lug, or vat from the definition.

Senate Bill 557 - Hainkel & others (Act 1239)

Changes membership of Reptile and Amphibian Task Force. Substitutes the Assistant Secretaries of the Office of Fisheries and the Office of Wildlife for the Chiefs of the Fur and Refuge Division and the Habitat Conservation Division. Requires that the board-certified pathologist or toxicologist be appointed by the department secretary, and provides for 3 herpetologists from any university, rather than being designated as from Tulane, LSU, and Southeastern Louisiana University.

Senate Bill 573 - Hainkel & others (Act 206)

Repeals the law authorizing the owner of a charter fishing vessel carrying no more than 6 persons to get a \$200 license to fish in federal waters, a section of the law no longer used. Existing laws cover such charter boats.

Senate Bill 972 - Hainkel (Act 1352)

Allows recreational fishermen to possess a two-day bag limit of speckled trout and redfish and 10 southern flounders for each consecutive day on the water. These may not be possessed while on the water. The only recreational fishermen allowed to possess these new possession limits while on the water are those aboard a vessel engaged in commercial fishing for over 25 consecutive hours. Also allows commercial fishermen (except shrimpers) to possess 10 flounders **per day per licensed person** for each day on the water. Under previous law, the possession limit was 10 per person per trip. See Senate Bill 1467 for shrimper's possession limit for flounder.

Senate Bill 1105 - Robichaux & others (Act 1106)

Requires the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to design and establish the "Commercial fishermen's Sales Card" to be used instead of the commercial fisherman's

license by January 1, 1999. Also requires that the price per pound and the count per pound of shrimp must be placed on the wholesale/retail dealer report form. Effective immediately.

Senate Bill 1106 - Robichaux & Landry (Act 93)

Provides that dredge material from dredging project of 25,000 to 500,000 cubic yards **may** have to be used to benefit wetlands. Under previous law, beneficial use was only required for projects over 500,000 cubic yards. Also creates bank stabilization requirements to prevent erosion on coastal dredging projects over one mile long.

Senate Bill 1108 - Robichaux & others (Act 919)

Lowers the minimum mesh size requirement **from** 1½ inches **to** 1¼ inches stretched, for shrimp nets used in inshore waters during the fall inshore shrimp season for all areas **except** the area from the Atchafalaya River to the western shore of Vermilion Bay and Southwest Pass at Marsh Island.

Senate Bill 1152 - Romero & John Smith (Act 1115)

Provides that in a dispute over damages to oyster leases by oil and gas activity, that if an agreement can't be reached, that the parties **may** file a request with the Oyster Lease Damage Evaluation Board for arbitration. Current law says that disputes **shall** be brought before the board for arbitration. Also increases the board from 4 members to 5. Members shall consists of one nominee from the Louisiana Oyster Dealers and Growers Association, one from the Louisiana Oyster Task Force, two from the Louisiana Independent Oil and Gas Association and the Louisiana Landowners Association, and an administrative law judge nominated by the other 4 members. The board shall develop a list of qualified biologists, and oyster lease surveys may only be conducted by these biologists. Also the act provides rules for the arbitration process.

Senate Bill 1467 - Robichaux & others (Act 1163)

Provides definitions for saltwater shrimp, take, possess, transport, processing, consumer, length of seines, trawls of other netting, and size of the mesh. Also provides that no commercial shrimping vessel may keep more than 100 pounds of southern flounder per vessel per trip. Effective immediately.

Senate Bill 1481 - Ullo (Act 707)

Restructures the Grand Isle Port Commission.

Senate Bill 1550 - Ellington (Act 1181)

Legalizes the use of hoopnets held open with a reinforcing wire frame instead of hoops (wire nets) in the area north of Interstate Highway 12 from the Mississippi state line to Baton Rouge and north of U. S. Highway 190 from Baton Rouge to Ragley and north of LA Highway 12 from Ragley to the Texas line. The minimum mesh size is 1-inch square on the webbing and 5-inches on the wire mesh frame. This net may only be used for the

taking of legal-sized catfish. The gear fee is \$25 dollars for commercial fishermen for any number of wire nets, and \$20 for 5 wire nets for sports fishermen.

House Bill 53 - Bruneau (Act 129)

Creates a Wild Louisiana Guide License for persons who conduct outings not involving hunting or fishing on Department of Wildlife and Fisheries lands. Allows the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to charge no more than \$100 for the guide license and no more than \$2 for clients who don't have a Louisiana fishing or hunting license or a Wild Louisiana Stamp.

House Bill 149 - Rousselle (Act 217)

Provides that the operation of watercraft falls under state and local trespass laws. Allows enforcement by state and local agencies, including game wardens. Allows any parish with a population over 440,000 to outlaw or regulate watercraft operating within 250 feet of any structure in Lake Ponchartrain leased by the local government from the state for recreational purposes. Effective immediately.

House Bill 222 - John Smith & Cain (Act 754)

Exempts persons in the business of renting and/or selling new or used watercraft that are only powered by a person's own energy from the definition of "marine dealer."

House Bill 246 - Stelly (Act 492)

Allows regulation of houseboats docked for longer than 30 days on a "Louisiana Natural and Scenic River."

House Bill 267 - Doerge (Act 410)

Requires the creation of a watercraft safety course for public secondary schools by the second semester of the 1997-98 school year. Effective immediately.

House Bill 547 - Odinet (Act 144)

Changes the saltwater/freshwater line to provide that the seven-tenths of a mile section from Bayou Sauvage, south to the Intracoastal Waterway, shall be in the freshwater zone.

House Bill 648 - Frith (Act 780)

Requires that a person registering a homemade boat must make application to the nearest regional office of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and that an agent of that office make an inspection of the boat. The inspection fee is \$25. If the inspection is favorable, the agent will stamp a hull number on the boat. The owner shall then submit a registration form along with the favorable report for registration. Also requires scrap yards that get a boat without hull identification numbers to notify the department to verify ownership before paying for the boat, unless ownership can be verified by registration.

House Bill 684 - Odinet (Act 4)

Allows the commercial gear and vessel licenses for menhaden (pogey) fishing to be issued in the name of the person in charge of the vessel, his employer, or owner of the vessel. Requires each vessel to have on board a gear and a vessel license and that they must be in the possession of the person in charge of the vessel. Allows the gear license to be issued to any person, association, partnership, corporation or other entity recognized by law. Effective immediately.

House Bill 721 - Dupre & others (Act 262)

Limits commercial shrimp vessels trawling in state territorial waters (beach to 3 miles offshore in most areas) to trawls totalling (not including the try net) a maximum of 130 feet of cork line and 165 feet of lead line in 1998 and 1999. In the year 2000 and after, the maximum total limit shall be 100 feet of cork line and 132 feet of lead line.

House Bill 768 - Triche (Act 263)

Allow the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to dispose of things seized by game wardens after two years instead of three years. Effective immediately.

House Bill 801 - Rousselle & Robichaux (Act 419)

Requires that money collected from the sale of oyster harvester licenses shall be used only for the Oyster Strike Force and the Department of Health and Hospitals for oyster water monitoring.

House Bill 803 - Rousselle (Act 727)

Repeals that part of the law that prevents a person from getting a saltwater commercial rod and reel gear license if they have been convicted of a fisheries-related class 3 or greater violation. Also provides that after August 15, 1997, that any person convicted of any fishery-related class 3 or greater violation shall not be eligible to hold a commercial fisherman's license for 2 years from the date of conviction. Upon second offense, the period of ineligibility is 5 years, and for 3rd offense the period of ineligibility is 10 years.

House Bill 805 - Rousselle (Act 1314)

Requires the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to develop a mitigation program for oyster leaseholders that are impacted by coastal restoration efforts. Leaseholders shall have the following options: lease exchange, lease relocation, keeping the lease without compensation, or lease purchase by the state if purchase is cheaper than relocation. Requires that a leaseholder who believes that he has suffered injury from a coastal restoration project must try to get relief through the oyster lease relocation program. All mitigation shall be subject to the availability of funds.

House Bill 976 - Durand (Act 267)

Changes the minimum mesh size on traps used to harvest wild crawfish **from** 3/4-inch by 3/4-inch **to** 3/4-inch by 11/16-inch. Authorizes the Department of Wildlife and

Fisheries to set, by rule, the minimum mesh size at 3/4-inch by 3/4-inch on the east side of the Atchafalaya Basin between Morgan City and Interstate 10 Highway. Effective immediately.

House Bill 1149 - Odinet (Act 801)

Provides that a spouse's income does not count against the requirement that a fisherman must show 50% proof of income from commercial fishing to be eligible for a claim with the Fishermen's Gear Compensation Fund. Effective immediately.

House Bill 1150 - Riddle (Act 802)

Defines a "private pond" for the purposes of production and harvest of catfish and crawfish as one that is privately owned, in which they are bred and raised under controlled conditions, and where persons other than the owner may be required to pay a fee to fish.

House Bill 1276 - Dupre and others (Act 277)

Makes the use of skimmer nets illegal to harvest shrimp or bait shrimp in state waters during **closed** season (technical wording correction).

House Bill 1521 - Odinet (Act 1413)

Reopens and extends the application time period for the "Commercial Fisherman's Assistance Program" which was to provide assistance to commercial fishermen impacted by the gill net law in 1995. Moves most responsibility for the program to the Department of Labor. Provides that the program shall give economic assistance for training in approved training programs and for taking courses at state universities and colleges, vocational-technical schools and community colleges. Provides that people who receive this assistance shall not be eligible for mullet strike net permits and licenses. Extends the application period to October 1, 1998 and repeals the part of the law that doesn't allow fishermen to apply for this assistance if they have had a class 3 or greater violation.

Adds possible loss of permit or license for the period for which it was issued, to a class 3 violation for second and later offenses of the same provision of the law. A violation does not prevent aid for training, or sale of gear, nor getting a commercial rod and reel or other net license.

Provides that when a license application requires submission of an income tax return, that proof of accuracy of the returns may be made by a notarized affidavit from the preparer of the return.

Requires the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to create a special apprentice license for the commercial harvest of saltwater fish at one-half the cost of the regular license. The requirements for the license shall include two years as a helper or apprentice under a regular licensed commercial fishermen and proof of income to meet requirements set by the commission. This license will allow the commercial harvest of

saltwater fish during the period that it is valid. At the end of the two years, the holder of the special apprentice license may apply for a regular commercial fisherman's license or permit for speckled trout, rod and reel, mullet, or restricted species. Any person who has ever held a commercial fisherman's license or who has had a class 3 or greater violation conviction cannot apply for the apprentice license.

Allows people that have received assistance under "Commercial Fisherman's Assistance Program" to apply for licenses and permits to fish for speckled trout and underutilized species. Effective immediately.

House Bill 1991 - Rousselle & others (Act 302)

Requires that beginning January 1, 1998, that each crab trap shall have at least 2 escape rings, one in each chamber, of 2-5/16 inches. Escape rings shall be placed on the sides of the trap, even with the trap floor or baffle. The rings must be attached to the trap with material of a smaller diameter than the wire of the trap. Escape rings may be blocked between March 1 through June 30, and September 1 through October 31 of each year. Escape rings shall not be required in crab traps used in Lake Ponchartrain by persons holding a softshell crab shedder's license.

House Bill 2002 - Hebert (Act 303)

Requires that in order to purchase a resident license, that any corporation or legal entity, shall be incorporated and domiciled in Louisiana and shall have a permanent physical location of business in Louisiana where records required of commercial fish dealers are kept. Also provides that any person, corporation or other legal entity that has a resident license in another state or country shall not qualify for a resident license in Louisiana.

House Bill 2007 - Jack Smith & others (Act 376)

Increases the price of the **nonresident** commercial fisherman's license **from \$400 to \$460**. Requires that commercial fisherman may sell their catch **only** to licensed wholesale/retail dealers. If a fisherman wants to sell his catch to anyone else he must purchase a wholesale/retail seafood dealer's license.

Increases the cost of the wholesale/retail seafood dealer's license for residents **from \$105 to \$250** and for nonresidents **from \$405 to \$1,105**, and dedicates funds from the wholesale/retail dealer's licenses to the development of a dealer receipt form report (trip ticket system). This license is not required for restaurants and retail grocers who only purchase seafood only from Louisiana wholesale/retail seafood dealer license holders and only sell the seafood **cooked**, primarily to be eaten on the premises. Restaurants serving raw oysters and sushi are **not** exempt, since the seafood is not cooked. (These restaurants may purchase either the wholesale/retail seafood dealer's license or the retail seafood dealer's license). The license shall list the physical place of business or vehicle. This license is valid only for the person to whom it was issued and must be in his possession. If issued to a business name, it is only valid for one place of



business and only valid to transact business for and in the name of the licensee. If the licensee owns or operates more than one place of business, then an additional license must be purchased for each place of business or vehicle. Such a license is **not** required for an employee delivering for a wholesale/retail seafood dealer and possessing a valid transport license purchased in connection with the wholesale/retail seafood dealer's license. Wholesale/retail seafood dealers are **not** required to buy a soft shellcrab shadders or a reptile and amphibian license.

Creates a retail seafood dealer's license which **only** allows purchase of seafood from wholesale/retail seafood dealers for resale to consumers. The license is valid only for the person to whom it is issued and is valid only for one place of business. Additional locations must have additional licenses with different numbers. Any business activity outside the place of business requires purchase of another retail seafood dealer's license. Purchase of such a license is not necessary for an employee transporting fish to the business under a transport license on behalf of a retail seafood dealer. The license costs \$105 for residents and \$405 for nonresidents.

Restaurants and retail grocers who purchase fish from licensed wholesale/retail dealers and only sell such fish fully prepared by cooking for immediate consumption are exempt from the retail seafood dealer's license requirements.

Also requires retail seafood dealers, restaurants, and retail grocers to buy only from wholesale/retail seafood dealers. Requires restaurants and retail grocers who purchase fish outside the state to have a valid wholesale/retail seafood dealer's license or a retail seafood dealers license and a transport license. Complete records are required of all dealers, restaurants and retail grocers.

House Bill 2010 - Dewitt (Act 233)

Re-creates the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries until July 1, 1999.

House Bill 2011 - Gautreaux & Robichaux (Act 305)

Provides that oyster leases located in impact areas of authorized or funded coastal restoration projects may, at the discretion of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries secretary, be renewed for 1 to 14 years, instead of 15 years. Also provides that if a coastal restoration project is canceled, 15 year leases will be granted. If a coastal restoration project is delayed, the secretary shall extend the lease with the current leaseholder. Leases located in areas where coastal restoration projects are operational may be leased and carry the first right of renewal for successive periods if the lease is capable of supporting oysters.

House Bill 2383 - Rousselle (Act 446)

Makes changes in the inside-outside shrimp line in Plaquemines Parish to more closely follow the identifiable coastline as it has eroded through the years. Effective January 1, 1998.

House Bill 2409 - Marionneaux & Greene (Ace 449)

Allows the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to adopt rules allowing fishing tournaments with over 100 participants to possess black bass that are outside of legal size limits. Effective immediately.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 11 - Ullo

Creates the Select Council on Shrimp Management and the Shrimp Industry Review Panel to study the shrimp industry and make management recommendations.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 41 - Theunissen

Declares September as American Alligator Resource Month.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 107 - Dean

Directs the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to use an average of the range of SPRs to determine the spawning potential ratio (SPR) for flounder.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 133 - Romero

Approves amendments to the wetlands conservation and restoration plan.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 148 - Robichaux & others

Urges and requests the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to make an annual report on the status of redfish and speckled trout to the legislature.

House Concurrent Resolution 10 - Dupre & others

Asks U. S. Congress to continue funding for Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) projects and that at least 20% of the funding be dedicated to restoration of Louisiana's barrier shoreline.

House Concurrent Resolution 33 - Bruneau

Urges and requests the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to enter into a reciprocal agreement with Mississippi recognizing recreational licenses and permits on saltwater and other waters in boundary areas.

House Concurrent Resolution 47 - John Smith

Approves the annual wetlands conservation and restoration plan prepared by the Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Authority.

House Concurrent Resolution 80 -Thompson & others

Asks the U. S. Congress to extend Louisiana's coastal boundary to be at least equal to that of Texas and Mississippi.

House Concurrent Resolution 186 - Faucheux

Directs the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to use an average of the range of SPRs to determine the spawning potential ratio (SPR) for flounders.

House Concurrent Resolution 187 - Faucheux

Suspends the regulation that limits shrimpers to 10 flounders per person. Allows commercially licensed trawlers to possess and sell any flounder taken as by-catch. Requires that any receipt for such flounders sold shall contain the wholesale/retail dealer's license number and trawl license number. (This conflicts with other law passed. See Senate Bill 1467 for the flounder possession law on shrimp boats)

House Concurrent Resolution 194 - John Smith

Asks the U. S. Congress and the appropriate federal agencies to approve the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Conservation Plan.

House Concurrent Resolution 207 and House Resolution 74 - Gautreaux

Directs the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to make an annual report to the legislature on the status of redfish and speckled trout.

## **DAVIS POND UPDATE**

Freshwater diversion projects are one tool used in an effort to restore or prevent marsh loss. Besides several smaller diversions, the state has a large one at Caernarvon near the St. Bernard/Plaquemines Parish line. The next major freshwater diversion project on the planning board is Davis Pond which will be located in St. Charles Parish. These waters will move through Lakes Cataouache and Salvador and eventually into and through Barataria Bay.

The Davis Pond diversion is scheduled to start flowing in the year 2000, however a great deal of monitoring work will take place before the project begins operation. Currently the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers is collecting water quality and sediment information in the area, and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries will begin collecting biological information in January, 1998. The purpose of collecting this information before the project is to have something to compare to after the diversion begins flowing. Intensive monitoring will continue for four years after the project begins flowing followed by 46 years of extensive monitoring.

Biological monitoring will include collecting data on the number of fish and shellfish in the area and where they are located, the number and concentration of waterfowl and alligators, the types of plants and their distribution, the effects on plants by nutrias, concentrations of pollutants in fish, shellfish, and bald eagle chicks, and salinity distribution within the estuary.

Water quality will be monitored for dissolved oxygen, pH, nitrogen, phosphorus, organic carbon, clarity, metals, oxygen demand, sediments, and certain pollutants.

The main goal of the Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion Structure is to put freshwater from the Mississippi River into the Barataria Basin estuary to hold back

saltwater intrusion. Over 800,000 acres will be affected by the diversion. Construction costs are estimated to be approximately \$81,000,000. Projected annual benefits include \$14,997,000 for fish and wildlife benefits and \$298,000 for recreational benefits.

Source: Project Fact Sheet, Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion Project, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. Davis Pond Memorandum, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources.

## **SHRIMP VIRUSES**

On July 25, the Joint Subcommittee on Aquaculture held a meeting in Thibodaux, Louisiana, to assess the threat to the U. S. shrimp industry from foreign shrimp virus diseases. The concern is that diseases such as infectious hypodermal and hematopoietic necrosis virus (IHHNV), taura syndrome virus (TSV), white spot syndrome virus (WSSV), and yellow head virus (YHV) will be introduced in our waters. The findings of the Joint Subcommittee are as follows:

- Shrimp viral diseases are widespread throughout the world, both in wild and cultured shrimp. IHHNV and YSV are native in wild populations of shrimp throughout much of Central and South America. WSSV and YHV are native throughout much Asia.
- In at least one incident, viral disease has been associated with drastic reductions in wild shrimp harvests. Beginning in 1987, one viral disease (IHHNV) was associated with a decline in the Gulf of California shrimp fishery to levels that could not support commercial harvests until 1994.
- Although these viruses have not yet been positively identified in native U. S. shrimp populations, very little effort has been made to look for them. Where investigations have been conducted, laboratory methods or sampling levels may have been inadequate to detect infection.
- Viruses have affected cultured shrimp throughout the world, often with catastrophic effects on production. For example, imports from Chinese aquaculture operations dropped substantially (1990 to 1995) due in part to viral disease. Outbreaks in 1995 and 1996 on U. S. shrimp farms caused a 50 to 95 percent loss of production at affected farms.
- Despite extensive efforts to prevent outbreaks on U. S. farms by the U. S. Marine Shrimp Farming Program, state agencies, and producers, numerous disease outbreaks have occurred in 1995, 1996, and early 1997.
- There are major economic concerns at stake. The U. S. shrimp processing industry employs over 11,000 people in 182 companies. Any new requirements

that may be necessary to reduce disease risks will increase costs to producers and processors, and ultimately to consumers.

- Some foreign aquaculture operations harvest their ponds immediately upon finding disease and export the infected shrimp. This management practice, combined with tremendous increases in shrimp importation, may increase risks to U. S. natural resources. Infected shrimp are now routinely found in U. S. retail markets.
- Shrimp may become infected from many sources. Major potential exposure pathways to wild shrimp in the U. S. include shrimp processing plant wastes, and wastes and escapement from aquaculture ponds. Other potential viral sources include infected bait shrimp, ship ballast water, non-shrimp translocated animals, and natural spread of the virus. Fishing vessels and intentional introductions are also possible sources.
- Native shrimp are vulnerable. Specific life stages of all of the principal U. S. shrimp species are highly susceptible to infection and disease from one or more of the four viruses as demonstrated in laboratory tests and outbreaks at aquaculture facilities. Recently discovered Asian viruses appear to be more virulent to domestic shrimp species than those viruses thought to be native to South and Central America.
- Species other than shrimp may be at risk. One or more of these viruses have been found in samples of other crustaceans from around the world, including copepods, crabs, and crawfish. A number of other host species for the viruses have been identified.

## **TEXAS LEGISLATURE PASSES CRAB LIMITED ENTRY**

The Texas legislature has passed a limited entry program this year for their commercial crab fishery. Under this program a person must have held a license the previous year to be eligible to buy a commercial crabbing license. The legislation limits each person to three licenses, but does allow for transfer of licenses under certain provisions.

Licenses may be suspended or revoked for flagrant offenses. Suspension does allow a person to renew the license after the suspension period. Also, 20% of all fees from commercial crab licenses and transfers are set aside to allow the state to buy back and retire licenses from fishermen willing to sell them. After the number of licenses is reduced to a number set by their commission, licenses may be reissued by lottery or auction.

The legislation also created a Crab License Management Review Board consisting of 5 to 11 crab license holders or wholesale seafood dealers. They shall advise their state

department and commission on administration of the program including eligibility, hardship appeals, definition of flagrant offenses, license transfers, renewals, suspensions, and revocations.

### **MARINE ADVISORY BOARD NEWS**

The Jefferson Parish Marine Fisheries Advisory Board has formed a Ports and Waterways Task Force to work on navigational needs in the parish. Waterways in the parish are heavily used by commercial and recreational fishermen. Additionally, the recent upturn in the oil and gas industry has made shallow-draft port and waterway improvements even more important.

Marine Fisheries Advisory Board member Woody Crews is serving as chairman of the task force. The Jefferson Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) has named Phyllis McLaren as full-time manager for port projects with JEDCO.

In addition to dredging and buoying projects, the Ports and Waterways Task Force has identified several other needs. One is for advisory signs, especially in congested or dangerous areas on Bayou Segnette and Bayou Barataria.

Abandoned or wrecked vessels are another problem. These derelict vessels are navigational obstructions, safety hazards and eyesores. Some of them block space that could be used to dock vessels.

Finally, the old Kerner Swing Bridge in Lafitte seems to be a problem. It is frequently out of service, as it was in February when it was closed to vessel traffic for 6 weeks. It is also narrow, only providing 72 feet of space when open. This is too small to allow barges carrying offshore drilling fabrications from the Harvey Canal to the Gulf to pass. Options are a new-high rise bridge, or opening another route through Bayou Perot.

Anyone with suggestions for port and waterway improvement needs or wishing to work with the task force may contact Phyllis McLaren at (504) 833-1881.

Source: The Jefferson Port Report. June, 1997.

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## THE GUMBO POT

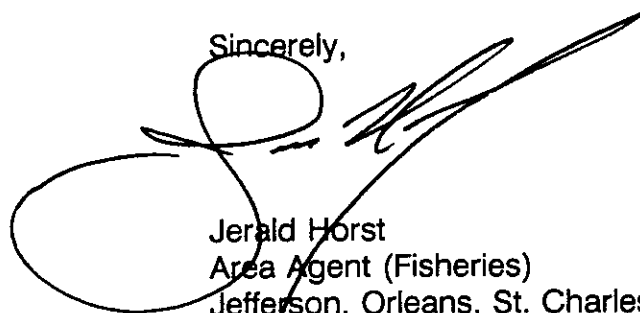
This month's recipe comes to us from Charles Arcement of Lafitte. In taste it resembles barbequed shrimp a little, but does not have all of the butter in it. I enjoyed it and I think that you will too.

### Shrimp Mosca

8 lb large head-on white shrimp	1 stalk celery, chopped
4 large onions, sliced	1 8 oz bottle pickapepper sauce
6 lemons, sliced	1 5 oz bottle worcestershire sauce
2 heads garlic, peeled and sliced	3 12-oz cans of beer
1 lb small potatoes	salt and pepper to taste
1 bunch green onions, chopped	2 loaves of French bread

Place a layer of shrimp in the bottom of a large pot. Put a layer of onions, celery, lemons, green onions, garlic and a few potatoes in another layer. Add some salt and pepper. Repeat layers until you run out of ingredients. Pour pepper sauce, worcestershire and beer over ingredients. Cook until shrimp are done, definitely not over 30 minutes. Serve with French bread to sop up the sauce. Serves 4.

Sincerely,



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