



## Public and Tribal Aquaculture

Public and Tribal hatcheries in Wisconsin use aquaculture for support of their fishery programs especially in restoration and sport fishery plus research, education and demonstration. Wisconsin's private commercial aquaculture industry supports public fishery programs by supplying live bait to bait dealers, forage to public hatcheries, rearing minnows and fish in cooperative agreement programs and stocking fish into public waters paid by private or non-profit money.

14 DNR Hatcheries/rearing stations

80 DNR Cooperative rearing locations

2 Federal Hatcheries

6 Tribal Hatcheries

3 University Aquaculture Facilities



**This brochure was produced in 2009 to increase the awareness of aquaculture in Wisconsin by:**

University of Wisconsin – Extension

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point Northern Aquaculture Demonstration Facility

**Economic data (2007) provided by** Steve Deller, Professor of Agriculture and Applied Economics, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and community development specialist, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension.

**Fish farm data (2009) provided by** Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection - Division of Animal Health

**Aquaculture Census data (2005, 2007) provided by** USDA National Agriculture Statistical Service

# Wisconsin Aquaculture Industry: Value and economic impact



Aquaculture is an important agriculture industry in Wisconsin. Aquaculture, or fish farming, is defined as the raising of aquatic organisms in controlled settings, and Wisconsin's private aquaculture dates back to 1856 with a sound environmental history using sustainable best management practices. Wisconsin fish farming is very diverse - raising trout, yellow perch, and bluegill for food; walleye, northern pike, muskie and bass for stocking; and minnows for bait. Wisconsin fish farmers use water responsibly to produce the highest quality fish.

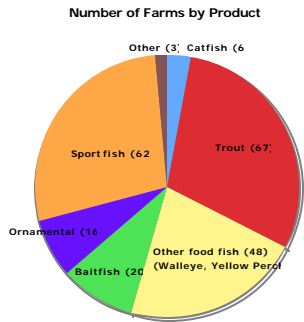
The raising of aquaculture products for food, stocking, recreation and bait generate employment in rural areas, economic activity, and taxes to local, county and state governments. Wisconsin grown fish contributes to local economies by reducing the number of miles your food travels, decreases our dependence on seafood coming from overseas, adds to business to business transactions and increases the labor force spending income.

## How important is aquaculture to the state's economy?

- Aquaculture sells \$14.1 million in fish and minnows
- Aquaculture contributes \$21 million in economic activity
- Aquaculture provides 441 jobs

Aquaculture pays over \$1.2 million in taxes (excluding K-12 taxes)



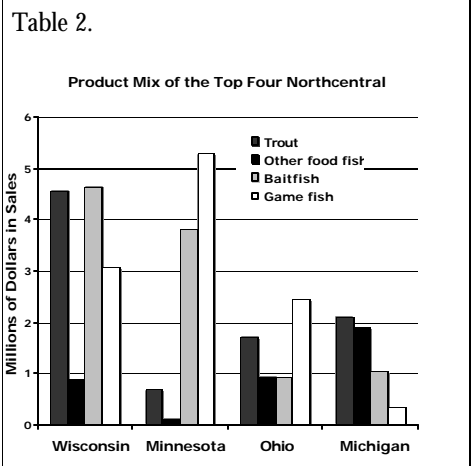


## Wisconsin Aquaculture is Diverse

The Wisconsin aquaculture industry produces a variety of products. Baitfish, including fathead minnows, golden shiners, and suckers, are raised and sold to the 450 bait shops in the state - where 97% of the 1.4 million anglers use live bait and contribute to the \$2.7 billion sport fishing industry. Trout and yellow perch are the primary fish raised for food in Wisconsin and walleye, sunfish and northern pike are the most common fish raised for stocking into private ponds or into waters of the state.

Table 1.  
Wisconsin's top aquaculture products (sales in dollar value, 2007)

1. Baitfish	\$4.65 million
2. Trout	\$4.58 million
3. Game fish	\$3.07 million
4. Other food fish	\$0.884 million



## Aquaculture pays taxes

The economic impact associated with Wisconsin's fish farms can be measured in the amount of tax revenue generated. These figures do not include the amount of taxes paid to school districts and the amount would increase significantly if they did.

Table 3.  
Taxes paid by Wisconsin Aquaculture

1. Property tax	\$355,484
2. Sales tax	\$281,539
3. Income tax	\$125,008
4. Fees/other taxes	\$471,642

## Aquaculture provides jobs

Wisconsin's aquaculture industry is mostly comprised of family run farms, providing 441 jobs. There is an entrepreneur spirit with fish farming and the owners. The industry also provides employment to farm workers, transportation workers, feed suppliers, veterinarians, professional and scientific services, along with jobs in construction, food service, the tourism sector, and government employees.

## How does Wisconsin Aquaculture rank?

Wisconsin aquaculture is growing both in amount of dollars sold and number of registered farms. Fish farms use ponds, raceways, and recirculation aquaculture systems (RAS) in raising their diverse products.

Table 4.  
Wisconsin Aquaculture Ranking

1. Number 20 in the United States
2. Number 1 in Midwest (9 states)
3. Number 2 in baitfish in US
4. Number 6 in game fish in US
5. Number 9 in US trout production



## How many fish farms are there in the state?

- 2314 registered fish farms including 94 WDNR facilities
- 1984 private farms with ponds
- 125 business farms
- 213 public fee fishing farms
- 6 wholesale fish processing farms
- 95 farms process fish for human consumption

## Aquaculture and the environment

Wisconsin fish farm environmental and fish health regulations are among the most stringent in the country. Wisconsin fish are raised according to best management practices, in clean water with responsible use of natural resources and are veterinarian-certified fish healthy. Our producers strive for environmental sustainability, and based on tests conducted to date, there are no suggested restrictions on the consumption of Wisconsin farmed raised fish.