



MoAA News

Linking the Missouri Aquaculture Community

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MDC proposes regulation to control trout parasite

The Missouri Department of Conservation has proposed a change to the Wildlife Code to help ensure the health of all trout grown and stocked in Missouri. Currently the Code requires that all salmonids imported into Missouri must be certified as free of "...viral hemorrhagic septicemia, infectious pancreatic necrosis, infectious hematopoietic necrosis, *Myxobolus cerebralis* or other diseases which may threaten fish stocks within the state." Furthermore, trout stocked in Licensed Trout Fishing Areas must meet similar requirements. These requirements have successfully protected public trout fisheries and hatcheries as well as private trout hatcheries from the spread of fish diseases.

An additional organism that is found in some Missouri trout populations that has not been part of these requirements is the parasitic copepod, *Salmonicola spp.* Currently, these organisms are known from the Meramec River basin and a few other locations in Missouri. They are found in Maramec Spring and infect trout reared at Maramec Spring Hatchery. To prevent the spread of parasitic copepods to new waters through the stocking of infected trout, the Department of Conservation has adopted a policy of not stocking trout from Maramec Spring Hatchery

outside the Meramec River basin and is proposing that all trout imported into Missouri, stocked in new Licensed Trout Fishing Areas, or purchased by the Department of Conservation be certified as free of parasitic copepods. Such changes would help prevent the spread of this organism to new locations and would help protect trout populations in public and private hatcheries and waters of the state from infection with parasitic copepods.

These changes would not affect trout stocked into waters immediately adjacent to a hatchery that contains parasitic copepods, trout stocked into privately-owned impoundments or trout sold for human consumption. These changes would also not prevent the export of trout infected with parasitic copepods unless regulations in the state of destination prevented such imports.

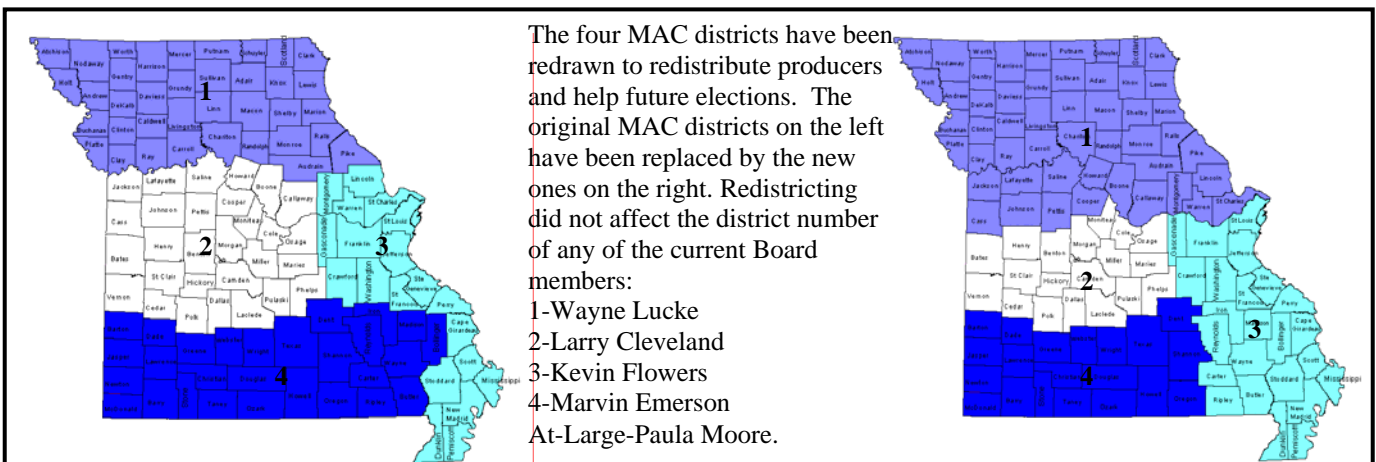
Wildlife Code amendments to reflect these changes will be proposed at the Department's Wildlife Code review in July. If approved, the regulations would become effective on March 1, 2010. In addition, future Department of Conservation contracts for purchasing privately-produced trout will require that those trout be free of parasitic copepods. Any comments on these proposals should be sent to Mike Kruse by May 1, 2009. He can be reached at 573-522-4115x3159, Mike.Kruse@mdc.mo.gov, or Missouri Department of Conservation, Fisheries Division, PO Box 180, Jefferson City MO 65102.

Missouri Department of Agriculture aquaculture directory updated

Updates to the Missouri Department of Agriculture online aquaculture directory are complete. Thanks to everyone who submitted updated information. The directory is a complete listing of all Missouri fish producers and is on the Department website http://www.mda.mo.gov/cgi-bin/aqua_directory.cgi. Call Bart Hawcroft at 573-5426-6666 if you have questions about your listing or being included in the directory.

MAC districts redrawn for 2010 election

During the January 22, 2009 Missouri Aquaculture Council (MAC) Board meeting, it was noted there are few enough commercial fish producers in the northern portion of the state that it is often difficult to get the required number of candidates. The possibility of changing the MAC by-laws and going to a statewide election was discussed. Unfortunately, this is not possible without submitting new legislation since the statute that created the Council (<http://www.moga.mo.gov/statutes/c200-299/2750000450.htm>) states, "The department of agriculture shall divide the state into four aquaculture districts which contain, as nearly as can be estimated by the department, an equal number of commercial producers, and one council member shall be elected from each aquaculture district." The districts have been redrawn and have been approved by the MAC Board. More information on the MAC is available on the MoAA website at <http://www.moaa.pond.org/mac/mac.htm>.



Farmers in 33 Missouri Counties Eligible for Ag Emergency Loan Assistance

The Missouri Department of Agriculture has been notified of a Presidential disaster designation by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for 33 Missouri counties. The declaration designates qualified counties as natural disasters and eligible for physical and/or production loss loan assistance. The counties included in the declaration are Barry, Bollinger, Butler, Cape Girardeau, Carter, Dunklin, Howell, Madison, McDonald, Mississippi, New Madrid, Newton, Oregon, Ozark, Pemiscot, Reynolds, Ripley, Scott, Shannon, St. Louis, St. Louis City, Stoddard, Stone, Taney and Wayne. The contiguous counties eligible for assistance includes Christian, Dent, Douglas, Iron, Lawrence, Perry, St. Francois and Texas.

Notification of the loan assistance came from USDA's Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Acting State Executive Director Gerald Hrdina. His letters informed the state Department of Agriculture that FSA emergency loan assistance was now available due the severe winter storm which occurred Jan. 26-31, 2009.

For more information, contact your local FSA office or call the Missouri State FSA office at (573) 876-0980.

USDA offers farmers markets grants

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) invites proposals for the 2009 Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) grant program. The Notice of Funds Available for the FMPP was published in the *Federal Register* on March 13, 2009. This is the fourth year of the FMPP grant program, which is authorized under the recently amended Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act of 1976.

AMS will award approximately \$5 million in competitive funds for FMPP in Fiscal Year 2009. FMPP grants are available at levels not less than \$2,500 and not more than \$100,000; no matching funds are required. Proposal submitted for funding should be designed to assist in promoting, expanding, and improving domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities.

Eligible entities for the 2009 FMPP grants include agricultural cooperatives, producer networks, producer associations, local governments, non-profit organizations, public benefit corporations, economic development corporations, regional farmers' market authorities, and Tribal governments to consider developing proposals for this grant program. Eligible entities must be owned, operated, and located within one or more of the 50 United States and the District of Columbia. Individuals are not eligible to apply.

Applications must be submitted to AMS and postmarked by **April 27, 2009**. For information on applying for FMPP grant funds, please visit our website: www.ams.usda.gov/fmpp.

Missouri Department of Agriculture promotes agritourism

(JEFFERSON CITY, Mo.) – Agritourism has become an ever-growing segment of Missouri's agriculture industry and an important component to farms across the state. Agritourism opportunities offers producers a chance to add value and income to their farms while providing Missourians a chance to experience agriculture through pumpkin patches, u-pick strawberries, blackberries, blueberries, apple and peach orchards, on-farm tours and corn mazes. The Missouri Department of Agriculture's AgriMissouri program offers marketing assistance and opportunities to those food manufactures, farmers, producers, agritourism businesses and farmers' markets that are interested in adding value to their existing operations or beginning a new venture.

"Agritourism businesses continue to provide Missouri families and visitors to our state with a multitude of affordable and educational day trips or weekend adventures. Agritourism is a benefit to farmers and also to communities across the state," said Dr. Jon Hagler, director of the Department of Agriculture. "As part of our AgriMissouri program, the Department of Agriculture is helping Missouri farmers add revenue to their farms and provides them the tools needed to succeed in agritourism."

Since 1985, the AgriMissouri program has assisted members in marketing their agritourism locations and Missouri-made products. Assisting start-up entrepreneurs is but one facet of the AgriMissouri program. Other areas include a membership program where members are listed in the online Buyers' Guide located at www.agrimissouri.com. The Buyer's Guide provides members an opportunity to describe their product or company, list retail locations or hours of operation and include photos of their company or product. Another business tool, the Agritourism Map, provides an online reference to agritourism locations across the state. In 2008, over 10,000 Agritourism Maps were distributed to consumers across Missouri.

AgriMissouri memberships are available to all Missouri agritourism farms or agribusinesses. The annual membership fee is \$50 and includes a business listing on the Agritourism Map; the 2009 deadline to be listed on the map is March 27. To learn more about AgriMissouri or agritourism, contact Sarah Gehring at (573) 522-9213 or visit www.agrimissouri.com.

Department of Agriculture offers vet training workshop

Missouri has very few veterinarians available that are familiar with aquaculture, fish health, and fish necropsy so the Missouri Department of Agriculture is offering a workshop May 6 from 8:00-3:00 to train them. The workshop will be at Lincoln University in Jefferson City and will include lecture as well as lab exercises.

The course will be led by Dr. Andy Goodwin a professor at the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff and Associate Director of the UAPB Aquaculture /Fisheries Center. Dr. Goodwin oversees the 4 UAPB Fish Disease Diagnostic Laboratories (2000 cases/year), co-chairs the USAHA/AAVLD Aquaculture Committee, serves on the AVMA's Aquatic Medicine Committee, is a former President of the American Fisheries Society Fish Health section, and serves on many national committees that work with fish health, education, and fish inspection regulations. He is well known for his professional expertise and engaging presentation style.

In October 2006, the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) issued a Federal Order, restricting the movement of many commercially valuable aquaculture species, due to concerns about the potential spread of Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS). The Federal Order applied to the eight states surrounding the Great Lakes and two Canadian provinces (Ontario and Quebec). Missouri was not under the Order but has been affected all the same. VHS has served to increase awareness of aquatic diseases in general and many states have increased their testing requirements as a result of the APHIS Order. More information about VHS and APHIS' efforts are at <http://www.focusonfishhealth.org/>.

There will be no cost for the meeting but everyone needs to register to be sure there is enough seating and lab equipment for the event. To save time, lunch will be brought in and will cost roughly \$7.00 per person. Please register with Dr. Linda Hickam at Linda.Hickam@mda.mo.gov or 573-751-3377. A brochure with details is also available on the MoAA website at www.moaa.pond.org.

FDA-CVM adds Ovaprim to Unapproved New Animal Drugs Index

The full press release is at <http://www.fda.gov/cvm/NewAnimalDrugIndex.htm>.

The Food and Drug Administration announced the first new animal drug granted to the Index of Legally Marketed Unapproved New Animal Drugs for Minor Species, i.e. the Index. The drug, Ovaprim (salmon gonadotropin releasing hormone analog plus domperidone), is indicated for use as a spawning aid in ornamental finfish broodstock.

The Index is one incentive under the Minor Use and Minor Species (MUMS) Animal Health Act of 2004. It's intended to allow companies to legally market veterinary drugs for minor species for which there are no human food safety concerns without having to go through the long and expensive process of a new animal drug approval. Inclusion in the Index is largely based on the evaluation of the target animal safety and effectiveness of each specific product by a panel of qualified experts. Minor species are all animals other than the major species (cattle, horses, swine, chickens, turkeys, dogs, and cats), for example, sheep, goats, honeybees, zoo animals, ornamental fish, parrots, ferrets, and guinea pigs. However, the Index is limited to non-food-producing minor species with the exception of certain non-food early life stages of food animals, such as some fish eggs.

The holder of the Index listing for Ovaprim is Western Chemical Inc. of Ferndale, Washington. For additional information on Ovaprim, please see <http://www.fda.gov/cvm/MUMSIndexList.htm>. Questions about the Index may be directed to Dr. Joan Gotthardt, Center for Veterinary Medicine (HFV-50), 7500 Standish Place, Rockville, MD 20855, 240-276-9331, Joan.Gotthardt@fda.hhs.gov. For additional information on animal drugs for minor uses and minor species, please see <http://www.fda.gov/cvm/minortoc.htm>.

Indiana publishes results of ethnic live fish market study

The Indiana Soybean Alliance funded a Purdue research study titled “An Assessment of Ethnic Market Opportunities for Indiana Farm-Raised Fish” to evaluate ethnic markets in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. It is online at <http://indianafishfarming.com/ISALiveFishMarketReport.pdf>. The overall objective of this study was to examine the ethnic market in the region, particularly in Indiana to assess seafood buying patterns and preferences. The findings reported from the study are useful in identifying the species that can be produced in Indiana to serve the live market, quantifying potential demand volume, and assessing demand trends and factors affecting demand. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. examine wholesale seafood purchase practices of ethnic fish retailers
2. determine factors important to their seafood purchase
3. identify marketing opportunities and develop marketing strategies that will enable effective servicing of ethnic fish markets
4. evaluate customer perceptions, preferences, and purchase patterns for fish

Online publications updated

There are lots of great fish publications online. Here are links to some of them:

The Extension publication *Nutrition and Feeding of Baitfish* has been updated and is available at http://www.uaex.edu/Other_Areas/publications/PDF/UAPB/etb-256.pdf. It is a 30-page manual and contains information from years of research.

A fact sheet dealing with non-native species was released this winter: *Non-Native Species in Aquaculture: Terminology, Potential Impacts and Invasion Process* <http://srac.tamu.edu/index.cfm?catid=22> (#4303).

The Regional Aquaculture Centers all have loads of information on their respective sites:

Southern Regional Aquaculture Center (SRAC) <http://www.msstate.edu/dept/srac/publicat.htm>

Northeastern Regional Aquaculture Center (NRAC) <http://www.nrac.umd.edu/publications/index.cfm>

North Central Regional Aquaculture Center (NCRAC) <http://www.ncrac.org/Publications>

Western Regional Aquaculture Center (WRAC) <http://www.fish.washington.edu/wrac/annualrpt.html>

Center for Tropical and Subtropical Aquaculture (CTSA) <http://www.ctsa.org/PublicationList.aspx>

Summary of NCRAC annual meeting in Kansas City

The NCRAC Board of Directors, Industry Advisory Council (IAC), Technical Committee (TC), and administrative staff, and other guests met in Kansas City, Missouri from Friday through Sunday, February 27-March 1, 2009. Friday evening, February 27, NCRAC people were invited to attend a reception hosted by the Missouri Aquaculture Association which followed a 2-day meeting of the Regional Aquaculture Extension Team (RAET).

On Friday afternoon, February 27, the NCRAC Board made decisions concerning projects that had been developed since the last NCRAC Annual Program Planning Meeting held in Indianapolis, Indiana in February 2008: (1) Drug Approval Research on 17 α -methyltestosterone (MT); (2) Comparison, Identification, and Role of Microbial Communities in Recirculating Systems in the North Central Region; (3) Rapid Determination of Amino Acid Requirements of Yellow Perch and Tilapia; (4) Regional Aquaculture Extension Specialist (RAES); and (5) a “Base” Extension project.

All projects were approved by the Board at the funding levels requested. The anticipated starting date for the projects, if approved by CSREES, will be September 1, 2009. Of interest to Missouri producers is the Rapid Determination of Amino Acid Requirements of Yellow Perch and Tilapia project will be undertaken by Rob Hayward with Jeff Firman and Kartnik Masagounder at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Oral presentations were made Saturday morning by a variety of speakers on a number of topics:

- 1) NCRAC Update – Ted Batterson
- 2) Status Reports
 - Regional Aquaculture Extension Specialist – Chris Weeks
 - Baitfish – Jeff Gunderson
 - Aquaculture Drugs – Roz Schnick
 - Other NCRAC-funded Activities (Largemouth Bass Nutrition; Feed Training Carnivorous Fish; Snail Management/Grub Control) – Joe Morris
- 3) Non-NCRAC Federally-funded Ohio Aquaculture – Hanping Wang & Geoff Wallat (Ohio State) and Ted Batterson for Carol Stepien (University of Toledo)
- 4) Non-NCRAC Federally-funded Wisconsin Aquaculture – Chris Hartleb (CSREES) and Brian Shepherd (ARS)
- 5) USDA/CSREES Update – Ted Batterson for Gary Jensen, National Program Leader for Aquaculture

Saturday evening the Board approved and set maximum funding levels for several different activities/projects based on a prioritized list that had been presented late Saturday afternoon by the IAC. They were as follows:

- 1) Up to \$150,000 for a 3-year project on the determination of production parameters of genetically-improved yellow perch lines at commercial densities in ponds at two or more facilities in the North Central Region
- 2) Up to \$150,000 for a 1-year project to evaluate newly-developed, least-cost experimental diets for bluegill at commercial densities in ponds at two or more facilities in the North Central Region. (Note that our own Paula Moore is on this committee.)
- 3) Up to \$100,000 to market fish as a “healthy” food in local/niche markets but with specifics as to what is to be undertaken to be determined after the Annual Program Planning Meeting.

Crystal Lake Fisheries to host biosecurity workshop

Six North Central Regional Aquaculture Center (NCRAC) funded Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) Workshops on VHS and biosecurity will be offered starting May 2009 through June 2010. Sponsors include USGS Upper Midwest Environmental Science Center, Iowa State University-CFSPH, Michigan State University, Missouri Aquaculture Association, Michigan Sea Grant, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point/NADF, and Wisconsin Aquaculture Association.

The focus of these workshops is to develop specific fish disease HACCP plans for each facility, representing three production systems (flow-through, pond, and recirculation). The three plans that will result from these workshops will be developed and distributed for other aquaculture facilities to use. A fish farm biosecurity video will also be developed from these workshops and be available.

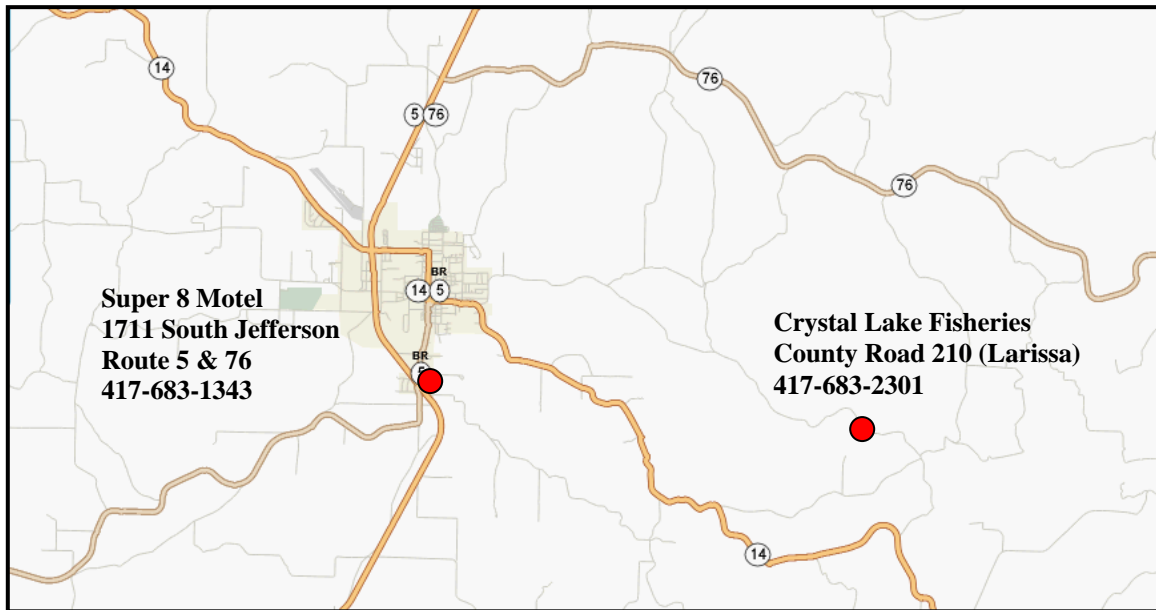
By using biosecurity principles in the aquaculture industry, the risk of VHS introduction and spread to NCR fish farms will be reduced and these will serve to protect these farms against a number of other fish disease pathogens. One approach to this problem is to apply the HACCP concept similar to that used by the seafood industry to minimize seafood consumption health risks. The advantages of this system are that it can effectively deal with a diverse industry, it has proven to be a good partnership between industry and government regulators, and it is effective when properly applied. The HACCP approach concentrates on the points in the process that are critical to the safety of the product, and minimizes. Utilizing cooperation between industry representatives, resource management agencies, and other AIS experts, the AIS-HACCP approach will reduce the risk that aquatic invasive species (AIS) will be established in new locations while maintaining the economic viability of the baitfish and aquaculture industries. This can therefore provide a means of obtaining AIS-free certification and instill confidence in the public that stocking programs and aquaculture facilities are conducting activities in an environmentally responsible manner.

Who should attend: Current and prospective fish farmers, state, federal and tribal hatchery technicians and veterinarians or anyone with an interest in aquaculture and reducing biosecurity risks

Cost: The registration for the HACCP Workshops on VHS & Biosecurity is \$15.00 per person.

Contacts: For additional information on the workshop and registration please contact Cindy Johnson who is organizing the event at 715-373-2990 or cindy@WisconsinAquaculture.com.

Location: The workshop will be at Crystal Lake Fisheries in Ava. Below is a rough map but more complete directions will be published soon along with additional details. We have reserved a block of rooms at the Super 8 Motel in Ava. Ask for the NCRAC/WAA Workshop to receive the \$58.46 rate. Reservations need to be made by May 24th. The Super 8 Motel is at 1711 South Jefferson Street near the junction of Routes 5 and 76 in Ava and may be reached at 417-683-1343 or 417-683-1369 (fax).



Fish farmer denied Arkansas permit

Some Missouri farmers and customers have had dealings with Rex Allen Curtis and will be interested in this article. The following is from the weekly Arkansas Game and Fish Commission outdoors newsletter:

AGFC denies permits for Hot Springs fish farmer LITTLE ROCK – The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission will not renew two fish farmer permits for Rex Allen Curtis of Hot Springs, who has a history of complaints from consumers about deceptive business practices.

Since at least the late 1990s, Curtis has operated commercial fish-supply businesses in Hot Springs, Lonoke and Jonesboro under various names, including Arkansas Fish Hatchery, Arkansas Fish Hatchery Express, Delta Supreme Fish Farm, and Arkla-Texoma Fish Hatchery. In late December 2008, Curtis submitted applications to the AGFC to renew his two commercial permits.

The AGFC notified Curtis in early January that it did not intend to renew the permits because:

- Curtis was convicted of illegally selling wildlife in Illinois (a Class A misdemeanor) in 2007;
- Curtis does not operate a fish farm at the address he supplied on the fish farmer permit application, and
- Curtis has been the subject of numerous complaints from consumers about unfair or deceptive business practices.

After Curtis received letters that denied the permits, he requested an administrative hearing with AGFC officials. The hearing was set for 1 p.m., March 16. However, an attorney representing Curtis informed AGFC officials late that morning that Curtis was withdrawing his request for a hearing. As a result, the decisions to deny the permits became final.

In a related matter, Arkansas Attorney General Dustin McDaniel filed a complaint against Curtis March 13 in Pulaski County Circuit Court. According to the complaint, Curtis has attempted to defraud consumers in Arkansas and other Southern and Midwestern states for 20 years through a “systematic, planned and coordinated scheme.”

The attorney general’s filing states that, “through the use of deceptive advertising, the defendant has repeatedly defrauded consumers who were interested in his promised ‘free fish’ for private ponds and lakes.” Consumers who responded to the ads were told the fish were not free, rather “buy one, get one free.”

Customers who agreed to the buy-one-get-one-free offer were asked for partial payment before fish would be delivered. Some customers complained that if fish were delivered, they were few in number, sick, dying or not the species ordered. Customers also have said they were pressured into buying more fish than they needed for small ponds.

Curtis does not own or operate a fish hatchery. He sometimes buys fish from hatcheries in Arkansas and other states. “In short,” states the complaint, “the defendant’s advertised claim that he owns and operates a fish hatchery is identical to his advertised claim of ‘free fish’ – false, misleading and deceptive.”

Curtis was named in an Arkansas attorney general’s lawsuit for deceptive practices related to catfish farming in 1989.

McDaniel’s filing seeks restitution and an injunction to stop Curtis from deceptive and unlawful practices, as well as a \$10,000 penalty for each violation. It also asks that all licenses and permits held by Curtis be forfeited, and that he pay court fees.

For Sale

Don Warnol at Warnol Valley Lakes in Dixon, Missouri has a 600 gallon live haul tank for sale. The tank is 7 feet square and 2.5 feet deep. It has 3 baffled compartments with 9 inch drains in both sides. There are 6 doors on the top. The tank needs some repair but is still useable. The agitators are not included. The price is \$1200.00 or best offer.



Upcoming Events

April 16-17

State FFA Convention

Hearnes Center

Columbia, MO

<http://dese.mo.gov/divcareered/>

May 6

MDA vet training workshop

Lincoln University Carver Farm

Jefferson City, MO

573-751-3377 or

Linda.Hickam@mda.mo.gov

Brochure at www.moaa.pond.org

June 25

NCRAC biosecurity workshop

Crystal Lake Fisheries

Ava, MO

715-373-2990 or

cindy@WisconsinAquaculture.com

Brochure at www.moaa.pond.org