



Agricultural Systems

PHOTO: USDA

Bringing fresh fish to new communities

Aquaculture is a rapidly growing industry in the United States. Across the country, land-grant institutions are using innovative technology and outreach to expand the aquaculture market and bring fresh, locally raised fish to consumers in new communities, including those in food deserts.

Successful examples include:

- Scientists in **Oklahoma** are studying aquaculture practices to establish sustainable production options with a simultaneous increase in profitability and efficiency. By identifying more sustainable options, producers can adopt these and enhance the marketability of their products, capitalize on niche markets and foster improved profitability.
- **Virginia** Extension specialists provided training and ongoing technical assistance to establish eight nontraditional tilapia-raising operations within or near Virginia food desert communities. Researchers estimate the potential local economic benefits could reach more than \$19,000, with nearly 4,000 fresh fishes available for purchase.
- **Arkansas** Extension specialists monitor the water quality in two catfish production systems that improve yields and production efficiency. Scientists estimate these systems will produce more than 5 million pounds of fish at a value of \$6 million, for a total economic impact of \$36 million in the Mississippi Delta.

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