



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

National Fish Hatchery System: Fish Technology Centers

The National Fish Hatchery System

The National Fish Hatchery System (NFHS) is a key contributor to the restoration and recovery of federally-listed and non-listed aquatic species with declining populations. A unique network of highly-skilled scientists work with hundreds of State, tribal, and non-governmental organizations and private citizen partners to deliver conservation of federally-listed and non-listed aquatic species. These conservation efforts include propagation of healthy aquatic species with the correct genetic strain to help re-establish wild populations; applied research, aquatic animal health diagnostics, and assessment; development of models to better focus management activities in the face of climate change; and development of new aquatic animal drugs. The NFHS consists of 72 National Fish Hatcheries (NFHs), one historic hatchery, nine Fish Technology Centers (FTCs), seven Fish Health Centers (FHCs), and the Aquatic Animal Drug Approval Partnership Program (AADAP). The Service's FHCs and FTCs provide the scientific foundation for many recovery and restoration programs. Ready access to science and technology support enables aquatic resource managers to work smarter, focus limited resources on effective management strategies, and achieve the Service's aquatic conservation mission.

Serving the Fish Culture Community

Fish Technology Centers were established in 1965 to develop and improve fish culture technique and provide assistance and advice on fish culture to National Fish Hatcheries, other Nations, and the aquaculture industry.

Today, Fish Technology Centers continue to provide technical support to the National Fish Hatchery System and the fish culture community, with emphasis on:

- Improving the quality, genetic diversity, and post-release survival of captive-reared fish;
- Identifying and reducing any detrimental effects of hatchery releases on wild fish populations;
- Developing technologies to reduce water consumption and pollution in hatcheries;
- Developing and improving diets to meet nutritional requirements of captive-reared fish;
- Developing culture techniques and diets for endangered and threatened species, maintaining captive populations and broodstocks, and assisting in monitoring the success of reintroductions; and
- Supporting the National Grass Carp Certification and inspection program.



Endangered Atlantic salmon conservation needs the assistance of National Fish Hatcheries; those hatcheries are guided by diet and genetics research underway at the Lamar Fish Technology Center in Pennsylvania.

Summary

Fish Technology Centers were established to provide leadership and guidance to the fish culture community. Over the years, fish culture studies focused on reducing costs, enhancing fish quality, and improving overall fish culture operations. The importance of Fish Technology Centers became clear as fishery managers became increasingly aware of the need to produce fish that are healthy, genetically diverse, and well-adapted to fishery management objectives.

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