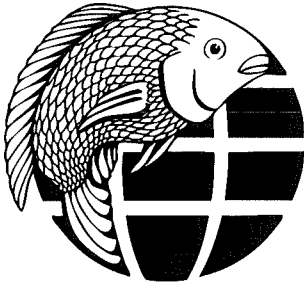


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AQUACULTURE COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH SUPPORT PROGRAM

## RESEARCH REPORTS

Sustainable Aquaculture for a Secure Future

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**Title:** Potential for Open-Air Fish Markets Outlets for Tilapia in Honduras

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**Abstract:** Honduran tilapia farmers face several problems regarding product size and export-quota requirements. One major obstacle is the significant production of undersized fish not suitable for the export market. Domestic markets would provide stability by offering additional market alternatives, thereby reducing risks associated with having only one target market. The goal of this project is to assess the domestic market as an alternative tilapia outlet. While the overall study includes analyses of open-air fish market, supermarket, and restaurant market outlets, this document will focus on open-air fish markets. A random sample of all open-air fish market vendors in the major urban areas and census of the fish market vendors in the small towns in the country resulted in 66 completed fish market questionnaires. The survey showed that tilapia is a well-known product in Honduran open-air markets. Overall, 70% of open-air market vendors sold tilapia, and over half of the open-air market vendors not currently selling tilapia responded that they were very likely to sell tilapia the next year. Approximately 25% of tilapia sold was from Lake Nicaragua. However, lack of demand, high wholesale prices, and off-flavor were mentioned as primary reasons for not selling or

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not continuing to sell the product. Results indicated relatively stable tilapia sales in recent years; however, inconsistency in supply was a major obstacle for further market growth. The survey results appeared to indicate potential to increase tilapia sales if a consistent supply can be maintained. Nevertheless, careful attention needs to be paid to the costs of production of farm-raised fish versus wholesale prices of wild-caught tilapia. Wholesale prices of tilapia ranged from US\$0.20 to \$0.61 lb-1 and averaged \$0.51 lb-1. It is unlikely that many tilapia farms would be able to produce and transport tilapia to open-air markets at these wholesale prices. Open-air markets do not appear to represent a profitable market outlet for farm-raised tilapia.

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