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Title: Aquaculture of *Colossoma macropomum* and Related Species in Latin America

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Abstract: *Colossoma macropomum* (Cuvier 1818), known as black pacu in the United States, is the second largest scaled fish after *Arapaima gigas* (*Osteo-glossidae*) in the Amazon basin, reaching weights of 30 kg in the natural environment (Goulding and Carvalho 1982). The fish has excellent characteristics for use in aquaculture (Campos 1986; Saint-Paul 1986, 1991; Van der Meer 1997), which include, reproducing under aquaculture conditions; being low on the food chain; accepting prepared feed; being highly resistant to disease, handling, an<f poor water quality; having rapid growth; being amenable to high density; having high market acceptability; commanding a high price; and also, being marketable as an ornamental fish. Countries in Latin America culturing *Colossoma* and similar species include Argentina, Bolivia, Brasil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela (Figure 1). *Colossoma macropomum* has also been introduced into the United States, Africa, and Southeast Asia (Lovshin 1995). Until recently, problems associated with larval production and nutrition, exasperated because much of the information about its culture is dispersed or unpublished, have limited viable aquaculture ventures with this group of Amazonian fishes. Brazil is the first country that has commercially cultured these characids (Da Silva et al. 1976). Very few researchers have access to the advances in culture of characids because much of the research appears in agency reports and, to further complicate dissemination of information, appears in different languages. There are hundreds of papers scattered throughout the region that require scientific analysis to establish a successful cultural program. Approximately 54% of the publications/reports are in Portuguese, 40% are

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in Spanish, and very few are in English and other languages. This chapter is an attempt to compile some of the more relevant information on *C. macropomum* and related species.

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