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## RESEARCH REPORTS

Sustainable Aquaculture for a Secure Future

Title: Comparison of rice straw and bamboo stick substrates in periphyton-based carp polyculture

systems

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**Date:** 24 August 2017

Publication Number: AquaFish Research Report 08-A24

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**Abstract:** 

An experiment was conducted to compare rice straw mat and kanchi (bamboo sticks) as substrates in periphyton-based polyculture systems. The experiment had three treatments: (a) no substrate (control), (b) rice straw as a substrate ( $3 \times 2.7 \text{ kg pond}^{-1}$ ) and (c) kanchi as a substrate ( $390 \text{ kanchi pond}^{-1}$ ). Fingerlings (n540) of rohu, *Labeo rohita* ( $24.5 \pm 0.5 \text{ g}$ ); mrigal, *Cirrhinus mrigala* ( $25.1 \pm 0.6 \text{ g}$ ); catla, *Catla catla* ( $25.8 \pm 0.5 \text{ g}$ ); common carp, *Cyprinus carpio* ( $27.6 \pm 0.6 \text{ g}$ ), and silver carp, *Hypophthalmichthys molitrix* ( $30.4 \pm 0.9 \text{ g}$ ) were stocked at a 3:2:2:2:1 ratio and cultured for 90 days. There were no differences in the number of plankton, periphyton and macro-zoobenthos among the treatments. The total plate count of bacteria was higher in the rice straw treatment ( $41320 \text{million} - \text{cfu m}^{-2}$ ) than that in the kanchi treatment ( $11780 \text{million cfu m}^{-2}$ ). Growth and the final mean weight of rohu, catla and common carp were higher in the substrate treatments than those in the control. Rice straw and kanchi treatment, respectively, resulted in 38% and 47% higher combined total weight gain over control. Gross margin analysis showed that rice straw treatment resulted in more profit than the control and kanchi treatment. Therefore, rice straw has the potential to be used to increase production in the low-input rural aquaculture.

**CRSP RESEARCH REPORTS** are published as occasional papers by the Program Management Office, Aquaculture Collaborative Research Support Program, Oregon State University, 418 Snell Hall, Corvallis, Oregon 97331-1643 USA. The Aquaculture CRSP is supported by the US Agency for International Development under CRSP Grant No.: LAG-G-00-96-90015-00. See the website at < http://pdacrsp.oregonstate.edu/ >.

This abstract was excerpted from the original paper, which was in the Aquaculture Research (2008), 39(5): 464-473.