

# FLORIDA AQUACULTURE

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## MAKE IT KNOWN: U.S. AQUACULTURE COUNTS!

The USDA-National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will soon conduct the 2005 Census of Aquaculture. The census is the only source of uniform, comprehensive aquacultural data tabulated for every state and will be the second census to take a comprehensive snapshot of aquatic species produced throughout the 50 states.

2005 Census of Aquaculture report forms will be mailed out December 15, 2005. Farmers are encouraged to complete and return their form within two weeks of receipt.

Data supplied by farmers will help the aquacultural community make informed decisions on critical issues, such as:

- Competitive market pricing.
- New drug development.
- Legislation.
- Transportation and marketing locations.
- Insurance.
- Financing.
- Disaster payments.
- Research.

Data will be collected on:

- Production and sales.
- Methods of production.

- Sources of water.
- Point of first sale outlets
- Aquaculture distributed for restoration, conservation, or recreational purposes.
- Farm employment.

Census data is used by:

- **Universities and government agencies** as justification for funding research, extension service, and other programs to develop new and improved methods to increase aquacultural production and profitability.
- **Aquaculture organizations** to evaluate and propose policies and program to assist commercial aquaculturists.
- **Aquaculture businesses** to develop market strategies and to determine locations of facilities that will serve aquaculture producers.
- **Local and national legislators** to develop programs to protect and support U.S. aquaculture.

Farmer response to the census is mandatory by federal law, Title 7, U.S. Code. This law also carries the responsibility for safeguarding the privacy of the farmers' responses. USDA-NASS will not disclose any data about an individual producer's operation.

For help to complete the census form, or if you produce and sell aquaculture products and have not received a form by December 31, 2005, call:

1-888-4AG-STATS  
(1-888-424-7828)

For additional information on the census of aquaculture or NASS surveys call:

1-800-727-9540  
<http://www.usda.gov/nass/>

### Special points of interest

- SVC surveillance continues.
- Bronson keynote at Mote.
- SVC import interim rule.
- Happy Holidays and a great New Year!

# USDA-APHIS SPRING VIREMIA OF CARP VOLUNTARY SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM

by Kathleen Hartman, DVM, PhD, USDA-APHIS

USDA-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has extended for another season the **voluntary** surveillance program for Spring Viremia of Carp (SVC). The intent of the SVC surveillance program is to demonstrate on a national level that Florida, as well as other participating states are free of SVC. This program does not certify farms as SVC free. Because of Florida's large and important ornamental koi and goldfish industry it is critical that Florida participate in this surveillance program and your cooperation is appreciated.

You qualify to participate in the voluntary SVC surveillance program if you:

1. Ship carp (koi and any other carp), goldfish, and/or minnows interstate or internationally and have raised koi carp or goldfish on



SVC koi showing petechial hemorrhages on its ventrum.

your premises during the past two years, or

2. Breed koi carp or goldfish.
3. Are not currently participating in the APHIS National Certification and Inspection Program for aquatic animal health.
4. Participated in the voluntary program last year, you **may** also submit fish again this year.

As part of the SVC surveillance program USDA-APHIS will pur-

chase 30 live fish of approximately 1 year of age from each lot, for up to 5 lots per farm. A **lot** is defined as a pond or tank or a group of ponds or tanks containing fish that come from the same population of breeders, have a common water supply, and share equipment. Additionally, any koi carp or goldfish showing clinical signs of sickness may also be purchased.

Sample collection will begin when pond water temperatures are below 68°F (20°C) for at least two weeks (usually late January through early March).

Please contact Dr. Kathleen Hartman (813-671-5230 ext. 119, 813-477-7019 (cell) or via email at [kathleen.hartman@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:kathleen.hartman@aphis.usda.gov)) if you would like more information or if you would like to participate.

## COMMISSIONER BRONSON KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT MOTE DEDICATION

Commissioner of Agriculture Charles H. Bronson spoke at the recent dedication of the Mote Aquaculture Park, a one of a kind aquaculture facility, in Sarasota. The 200 acre park will play a significant role in boosting Florida's growing aquaculture industry and will utilize state-of-the-art methods for water reuse.



The facility is the largest aquaculture park in Florida and will be much more than a production facility. The park will conduct research to raise alternative fish species for farmers to grow and hold workshops to demonstrate effective and efficient production technology. The recirculation of water will also promote water conservation, an important issue at a time when there are many com-

peting interests for Florida's water supply.

"This park is a unique facility whose work promises to expand Florida's

capability to produce farm-raised fish," Bronson said. "Aquaculture already is a rapidly expanding industry, and the work being done at Mote Marine will help our industry continue its expansion. The dedication was a fitting tribute to Mote Marine's 50 years of research with similar humble beginnings to those of the aquaculture industry it will serve."

Bronson said the timing of the facility's dedication is particularly important as it comes as many segments of Florida agriculture are recovering from the unprecedented number of hurricanes in 2004 and 2005, and research being conducted by the company offers promise for the production of alternative crops which is critical for the overall agricultural industry.

"Aquaculture is an important industry in Florida and will continue to grow," Bronson said. "This environmentally friendly facility provides the tools and education necessary to encourage more people to consider commercial fish farming as a career."

For more information, visit <http://www.mote.org/>. Image courtesy Janos Balla, Mote Marine Laboratory.

# PENDING SPRING VIREMIA OF CARP IMPORT INTERIM RULE<sup>1</sup>: HOW WILL IT EFFECT YOU?

by Kathleen Hartman, DVM, PhD, USDA-APHIS

Recent estimates from USDA-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) indicate that the Spring Viremia of Carp (SVC) importation interim rule for susceptible species may go into effect by the end of this year, or within the first part of 2006. This will require that naturally susceptible SVC species<sup>2</sup> being imported into the United States must be accompanied by an official export health certificate, with English translation, stating that the fish originate from a country, region or farm that has been determined to be SVC free. In addition, if you are importing SVC susceptible species into the U.S. you must acquire an import permit through APHIS prior to scheduling a shipment. Importers of koi and goldfish will be most affected by the implementation of this interim rule.

This importation requirement will not affect interstate movement of these animals. To date, no state within the U.S. requires a health certificate claiming freedom of SVC for susceptible species moving between states. However, individual states may elect to enforce this type of restriction to protect SVC susceptible species within their state.

Ultimately, this means if you are currently importing SVC susceptible species into the U.S. and the source/supplier of your fish is not testing for SVC according to the World Organization of Animal Health (OIE) guidelines<sup>3</sup> you will not be able to import these fish into the U.S. once this interim rule is implemented. It is recommended that you discuss this issue with your suppliers to determine their status and encourage them to start testing for SVC. If they have not been testing, it will take at least two years for their SVC-free status to be confirmed according to internationally established guidelines.

To date, there are only a limited number of koi and goldfish farms around the world that are determined to be SVC-free. Looking forward it is also prudent to recognize that once the U.S. implements this type of restriction on imports, other countries, and even individual states, may follow suit.

## Impact Summary for Ornamental Fish Industry

- By late 2005 or early 2006 an SVC importation interim rule will restrict imports of koi and goldfish (as well as other SVC susceptible species)
- Import restrictions include a requirement that imported koi and goldfish come from "SVC-free" facilities
- "SVC-free" status is based on specific testing guidelines outlined by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).
- Companies that have not been following these guidelines for testing and documentation for a minimum of two years will not be considered "SVC-free"
- Companies that decide to follow these guidelines will need to test fish for a minimum of two years before they will be officially considered "SVC-free"

Domestic (U.S.-produced) fish are currently not restricted for state-to-state shipments

- Some states with aquaculture industries may, in the future, require similar guidelines to protect their industries
- If you are a domestic producer, you may wish to begin steps for becoming "SVC-free"; international or interstate restrictions may require it in the future
- If you are a domestic producer, you will not be able to

import fish from other countries that are not considered officially "SVC-free"

If you import fish:

- Make sure you have determined the "SVC-free" status of the exporting facility,
- Make plans to receive fish from such a company in the near future, to avoid problems with supplies of koi and goldfish

Please contact Dr. Kathleen Hartman (office: 813-671-5230x119; email: [kathleen.h.hartman@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:kathleen.h.hartman@aphis.usda.gov)) for additional information.

Article Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> An interim rule may be used instead of a proposed rule when there is good cause for making a rule effective on publication. Public comments will be invited during the period between an interim rule's implementation and subsequent consideration for development as a final rule.

<sup>2</sup> Naturally susceptible SVC species as identified by the 2005 OIE Aquatic Animal Health Code: Common carp and koi (*Cyprinus carpio*), grass carp (*Ctenopharyngodon idellus*), silver carp (*Hypophthalmichthys molitrix*), big-head carp (*Aristichthys nobilis*), crucian carp (*Carassius carassius*), goldfish (*Carassius auratus*), tench (*Tinca tinca*) and sheatfish (*Silurus glanis*). Fish species not listed will be exempt from the import requirements.

<sup>3</sup> Freedom of SVC must be demonstrated by testing according to World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) ([www.oie.int](http://www.oie.int)) guidelines either on the country, zone or farm level. OIE guidelines require a minimum of twice a year testing (during the appropriate water temperature range for SVC) for two consecutive years with negative results.

**CHARLES H. BRONSON  
COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE**

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*Benefiting commercial aquaculture,  
Conserving natural resources*



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