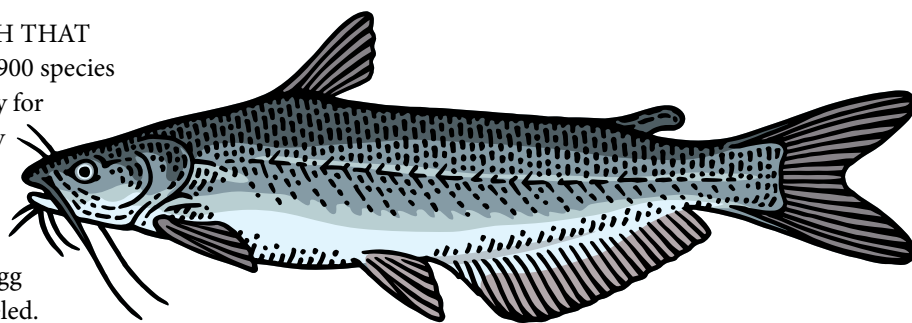


# USDA Inspection Guidelines for Siluriformes Fish (Catfish)

**S**ILURIFORMES IS AN ORDER OF FISH THAT INCLUDES ALL CATFISH — nearly 2,900 species in total. On March 1, 2016, responsibility for inspecting Siluriformes fish was officially transferred to the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) — the public health agency in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) responsible for ensuring that meat, poultry, and egg products are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled.



This transition to the USDA means that any person or business that engages in commerce of Siluriformes fish and its products, including processing, packaging, storing, transporting, or distributing, must register their business and apply for a Grant of Inspection (GOI) **using Form 5020-1, Registration for Meat and Poultry Handlers; available online at** [https://www.fsis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2020-08/Form-5020-1\\_0.pdf](https://www.fsis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2020-08/Form-5020-1_0.pdf). Businesses that receive a federal GOI are known as 'official establishments', and are assigned an establishment number. To receive a GOI, a facility needs to be registered with Louisiana Department of Health and complete the seven tasks listed below.

**TASK 1 Ensure your facility meets regulatory sanitation performance standards (SPS).** You must operate and maintain your facility so as to prevent insanitary conditions and to ensure that product is not contaminated. There are SPS requirements for:

- Grounds and pest control
- Construction
- Light
- Ventilation
- Plumbing
- Sewage disposal
- Water supply (including ice)
- Dressing rooms, lavatories and toilets
- Equipment and utensils
- Sanitary operations
- Employee hygiene: cleanliness and clothing
- Disease control



## **TASK 2 Obtain approval for all product labels.**

FSIS must approve all labels used on products produced by official establishments. More detailed information is available at <http://bit.ly/FSISLabelGuide>

All labels must include:

- Product name
- Inspection legend and establishment number
- Handling statement (if required)
- Net weight statement (if required)
- Ingredients statement (if composed of two or more ingredients)
- Name and address of the manufacturer, packer or distributor
- Nutrition facts (unless exemption applies)
- Safe handling instructions

Once Siluriformes fish and fish products are inspected and found to be wholesome, unadulterated, and accurately labeled, they receive the USDA official inspection legend, which must be shown on all product labels.





**TASK 3 Obtain a water report attesting to the potability of your water supply.** You must be able to provide a water report from either the state or local health agency that certifies the potability of the water supply. If using a private well, you must be able to provide documentation that it is inspected at least semi-annually.

**TASK 4 Obtain approval from the state or local health authority if sewage disposal system is a private system.** Sewage must be disposed into a sewage system separate from all other drainage lines or disposed of through other means to prevent backup of sewage into areas where product is processed, handled, or stored. You must be able to provide the letter of approval from the state or local health authority upon request.

**TASK 5 Provide written Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOPs).** Each official establishment must develop, implement, and maintain written and signed SSOPs to prevent product from direct contamination and adulteration. These SSOPs apply to all procedures conducted in your facility, both before and during operations, and must be monitored daily. Farmers and transporters that provide fish to official establishments must meet the sanitary requirements for pre-harvest and transportation.



**TASK 6 Provide a written hazard analysis and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans, when applicable.**

Official establishments must conduct a hazard analysis and document the results. Documentation must include a flow chart that describes the steps for each process, product flow in the establishment, and intended use or consumers of the finished product. If the hazard analysis reveals that any food safety hazards are reasonably likely to occur for a product, you must then develop and implement a written HACCP plan for that product.

*Key Handling Practices for Fishermen*

- Always bring ice to cover fish in your boat, especially in summer months.
- Alternate layers of fish and ice, to chill catch quickly and evenly.
- Bring fish temperature below 50° F within a couple of hours of harvest to protect quality and prolong shelf life.



**TASK 7 Provide a written recall plan.** Domestic official establishments must develop and maintain a written recall plan in the event that adulterated or misbranded product enters commerce. This plan must contain the procedures you will use to conduct a recall of any product you produce and ship, including how you will determine the need for a product recall.

**TASK 8 Pre-requisite programs.** Written pre-requisite programs and records must be developed and implemented to ensure the safety of the product. Some examples of pre-requisite programs include lockout/tagout plan, purchasing & receiving, cold management, allergen handling, food defense, pest control, inedibles permit, etc.



For complete guidance to USDA/FSIS Mandatory Inspection of Siluriformes fish and products derived from such fish, visit <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/guidelines/2017-0003>

