



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FISH STICK PRODUCTION SOARS

Approximately nine million pounds of fish sticks, the popular new breaded food item, were produced in the United States during the first quarter of 1954, the Fish and Wildlife Service noted today. This exceeds, by $1\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds, the Nation's entire output last year.

A report of the Service shows that the 13 firms making fish sticks last year showed a 1953 output of $7\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds. These same firms, which now form only a nucleus of total producers, accounted for 8,977,000 pounds during 1954's January-March period alone.

A number of new firms, for which figures are not yet available, have begun the manufacture of this fast-selling commodity since January 1. Total United States production for this year's first quarter, therefore, is certain to have exceeded the nine million pound mark. It is estimated that the total output for the year will exceed 40 million pounds.

Fish sticks are uniformly shaped pieces of fish dipped in batter, breaded, and frozen in consumer-sized packages. Closely resembling French-fried potatoes in appearance, they can be purchased in precooked or uncooked form. The precooked sticks, which have been deep-fat fried before freezing, are easily heated in the oven at home for serving. The uncooked sticks are designed for those housewives who prefer to do the frying themselves. Consumer acceptance of fish sticks has been so widespread that some sources expect them to do for the fishing industry what fruit juice concentrates have done for the citrus fruit trade.

During the last quarter of 1953, the demand for fish sticks was so great that producers were unable to keep current with their orders. With new firms constantly entering the field, however, the supply in 1954 is expected to cope satisfactorily with the demand.

Both imported and domestic fish are used in fish stick manufacture. The sticks produced last year were composed chiefly of cod and other groundfish. By early 1954, however, such species as salmon, halibut, whiting, and Pacific rockfishes were also being used.

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