

Technical Bulletin #08:

Aquaculture Record Keeping

Why is it important to keep good records?

Records are tools that can help farmers learn about their farms. Someone who keeps accurate, detailed, and complete records will have the tools to evaluate farm activities. Good records can improve the farm performance, improve farm function, and increase the profitability of a farm activity. Good records can also allow a farmer to compare different production techniques or systems and choose the one that best meets his or her goals.

What types of records should be kept?

There are two basic types of record. There is a daily record and a seasonal crop record. The two types of record will enable a farmer to keep track of all the things that go into or are taken out of a pond. These records will contain both the physical details and the financial details of all inputs and outputs of the pond. Physical details include such things as: weight, volume, number, brand, and description (i.e. percentage of protein in the diet). Financial details include such things as: unit cost, total cost, sale price, and total income.



Daily Feed Record

The daily feed record documents the amount of feed and other things the farmer does on a daily basis in every pond on the farm. Most importantly, aside from feed, this includes things like Secchi disk depth and water quality information. A record of how much was fed, when it was fed, and the fish behavior while feeding will become a vital part of the information needed to run an efficient and healthy pond. It is important that each pond have its own daily record with all the information for each pond on one record sheet. To see an example of the daily feed record sheet, look on the back of this technical bulletin.

A record should be kept of how much is fed to each pond every day. The total daily feed ration should be recorded for each pond or cage, along with the type of feed being used. The days are divided into four boxes. The boxes are used to record the feeding response at each feeding. Feeding response is recorded as “Excellent” if all the feed is consumed in less than five minutes. If the feed is all eaten between five and 10 minutes, the feeding response is recorded as “Good.” If the fish take between 10 and 20 minutes to finish their feed, the feeding response is recorded as “Fair.” The feeding response is recorded as “Poor” if it takes the fish longer than 20 minutes to finish their feed.

At the end of the week, farmers should record the total amount of feed given to each pond. This data is will allow the calculation of such things as the feed conversion ratio and the total cost of production.

The last cell of the pond row is to record any observations of the fish pond. For example; water color, changes in feeding rates, missed feedings, etc.

At the bottom of the record sheet is a section to record water quality information. This should be recorded in the column for the day in which it is taken.

At the bottom of the record sheet is a section for taking notes. This is useful if there are things like unscheduled changes in the feeding rate. It is also a good place to record sample data and how the feeding rate was calculated.

Seasonal Crop Record

The crop record sheet is used to record chronologically everything that goes into or is taken out of a particular pond. This is where the fish counts and weights are recorded. It is also where anything other than feed that is put into or taken out of the pond is recorded, including: water, lime, fingerlings, sample data, treatments, and harvested fish.



At the top of the crop record data form is space to record the pond identification, pond dimensions, the species of fish being grown, and their purpose. The purpose of a pond can be for raising brood fish, fingerlings, or growing of market fish.

The first column of the table records the date of any activity in the pond. The next five columns are used to indicate what type of activity is being recorded. If stocking fish is the activity, a mark is placed in the cell in the stocking column. In the seventh column the details are recorded. These include the counts, weights, costs, doses, volumes, and other such details. In columns eight and nine the total count and weight of all fish in the pond on the day of the activity is recorded.

A harvest is recorded any time fish are removed from the pond. This means that even dead fish should be counted and weighed and recorded as a harvest. Fish taken for personal use should also be recorded as a harvest.

The treatment category includes such things as: pond drying, liming, using burnt lime to sterilize the pond, and even water changes.

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