

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE



OFFICE OF THE COORDINATOR OF FISHERIES

For Release to PM's FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1945.

At least a temporary decline in the production of shrimp was forecast today by the Office of the Coordinator of Fisheries on the basis of reported damage to the shrimp fleet by the hurricane that swept the Texas coast last week.

With the wreckage of shrimp boats strewn along the path of the hurricane, fishery shore plants damaged, and some of the principal ports of the shrimp fleet completely submerged by the tides, the principal fishery industry of the Texas coast suffered a blow from which it will require at least several weeks to recover, officials of the Coordinator's office said.

Normal production of shrimp by the Texas fleet is about 15 million pounds annually, or three-fourths of the total seafood production of that state. In the United States shrimp industry, Texas holds second place, supplying 10 per cent of the total catch. Louisiana furnishes the bulk of the catch -- about two-thirds.

The season for shrimping in the inshore waters of Texas was due to open only a few days after the storm struck. Observers who sent reports on storm damage to the Fishery Coordinator's Office said that many shrimp boats at Copano Bay, Sea Drift, Port O'Conner, Port Lavaca, Bay City and other ports were smashed and driven ashore.

On the Gulf coast as a whole, the shrimp season has gotten off to a slow start, according to Milton C. James, Acting Deputy Coordinator of Fisheries. Statistical surveys covering the major producing areas showed receipts of 4,082,388 pounds of shrimp to August 25, compared with 6,248,785 pounds during the same period last year. An unusually large percentage of the catch was sold fresh. Only 1,624,572 pounds of shrimp had been canned by August 25, compared with a pack of 4,265,460 pounds on August 26, 1944.

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