

Fish Farming in Wisconsin

What You Need to Know



Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection • Division of Animal Health • February 2015

*This is only a summary of the requirements for fish farms in Wisconsin. You can find the complete statutes and rules online; web addresses are listed at the end of this document. You can also call us at 608-224-4887 to get paper copies. **Do not use this summary as your only reference in starting up a fish farm.** You need to talk to us in the Division of Animal Health at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP).*

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| You need to register if | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ You hatch fish eggs or hold live fish for any of the following purposes:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sale or distribution• Stocking into state waters• Fishing• Bait or fertilizer• Use as food for humans or animals• Education, demonstration or research✓ You hold live fish or fish eggs owned by someone else. |
| You do not need to register if | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Fish/eggs are ornamentals and are not mixed with non-ornamentals or reared for bait, or food for humans or animals.✓ You hold live bait fish under a DNR bait dealer license and only sell the fish at retail.✓ Fish/eggs are in a fully enclosed building, solely for education, display, or research in that building, not commingled with fish/fish eggs for other purposes, no untreated water used to hold fish or eggs is discharged to state waters, and all dead fish/offal from the building are disposed of by rendering, composting, municipal solid waste disposal or means approved by the department.✓ You exhibit live fish publicly for 15 days or less in a calendar year, or longer with our authorization.✓ You hold live fish or eggs for 30 days or less at a food processing plant, retail food store or restaurant pending slaughter or sale to consumers, provided that they are not commingled with fish/fish eggs used for other purposes, no untreated water used to hold fish or eggs is discharged to state waters, and all dead fish/offal are disposed of by rendering, composting, municipal solid waste disposal or means approved by the department.✓ You are only transporting live fish or fish eggs to or from a fish farm.✓ You hold fish at a temporary fishing event, if certain requirements are met.✓ You hold live fish solely for the purpose of sale as pets, if certain criteria are met.✓ You temporarily hold live fish in a Wisconsin DNR fish egg collection station located in waters of the state, solely for the purpose of collecting eggs, if certain requirements are met. |
| If you have a private fish pond | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ By registering your private pond, you are entitled to stock your pond without a DNR permit.✓ If you register, you do have to meet all of our requirements for fish farms.✓ A WI DNR aquatic pesticide or herbicide use permit may still be required.✓ Registration is not intended for ponds that do not contain fish.✓ Whether you register or not, you still must meet DNR requirements if your pond has an inlet or outlet connecting it to public or natural waters. |
| Fish farm types | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Type 1 registration allows:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fishing, including public fee fishing• Collecting eggs from your own brood stock• Obtaining live fish or fish eggs from a source other than your own farm (except from a wild source)• Selling or distributing live fish/fish eggs to a food processing plant, retail store, or restaurant that meets certain requirements.• Raising bait for personal use at your fish farm• Moving live fish between Type 1 fish farms that you operate in Wisconsin• Selling live fish/fish eggs off-site to consumers for food provided certain requirements are met. |

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| Fish farm types | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Type 2 registration allows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the activities allowed under Type 1 • Raising bait for sale or trade • Raising, buying, trading, or importing live fish/fish eggs for resale, stocking, processing, or exchange • Distributing fish/fish eggs (not produced on your fish farm) from inside this state to outside this state ✓Type 3 registration allows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the activities allowed under Types 1 and 2 • Obtaining, selling or distributing live fish or fish eggs from a wild source of species susceptible to Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia. |
| If you have fish farms at more than one location | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓A “location” is a single parcel of land, or two or more contiguous parcels of land. “Contiguous” means “touching,” but a road, river, railroad, or section line does not break the contiguity. ✓Each location must be a separate registration, on a separate form. ✓You do not have to register all your locations as the same type of fish farm. ✓Call us before moving fish or eggs between locations to see if you need a fish health certificate. |
| If you have more than one fish farm at the same location | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓You can register more than one fish farm on the same parcel or on contiguous parcels if we certify the farms as medically separated. Call 608-224-4887 to request certification. There is a \$400 (per day) fee for inspection. ✓Each farm <i>may</i> be considered separate for purposes of disease control and movement; this means that you might need a fish health certificate to move fish or eggs between the farms. Contact us before moving fish or eggs. |
| Annual fees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Type 1 registration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$37.50 for one registration • \$50 for two or more registrations ✓Type 2 and Type 3 registration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$125 for 1-5 registrations • \$150 for 6-10 registrations • \$200 for 11-20 registrations • \$300 for more than 20 registrations ✓Primary and secondary schools and veterans eligible for the veteran’s fee waiver program under s. 45.44, Wis. Stats., are exempt from fees. |
| Completing the application for registration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Be sure to complete all areas of the form, on both sides of each page. If you don’t, it will delay your registration. ✓You also need to register as a livestock premises if there are fish/fish eggs in the pond or you intend to stock the pond this registration year. Call 1-888-808-1910 or go to www.wiid.org to register your premises. Without this livestock premises code on your fish farm registration, processing will be delayed. ✓A check or money order for the appropriate fee must accompany your application. We will not issue your registration certificate without payment. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Send the application and payment to: <p style="margin-left: 20px;">WDATCP PO Box Lockbox 93598 Milwaukee, WI 53293-0598</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send Social Security number form to: <p style="margin-left: 20px;">WDATCP/DAH Attn: Program and Policy Supervisor PO Box 8911 Madison, WI 53708-8911</p> </div> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Call 608-224-4887 if you have questions about completing the application. |

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| Ownership changes | ✓ Registration is not transferable. The new owner must apply to register the farm, even if the registration was up-to-date under the previous owner. |
| Other changes | ✓ If there are changes in any of the information you provided on your registration application, you must contact us. Call 608-224-4887 and ask for the aquaculture program associate. |
| Keeping records | <p>✓ You need to keep the following records of all fish/fish egg shipments to or from your farm for five years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name, address, fish farm registration number (if any), and premises identification number (if any) of the person who shipped the fish/eggs, or to whom you delivered fish/eggs • The date that you received or delivered fish/eggs • The location where you received or delivered fish/eggs • The size or class, quantity, and species of fish/eggs received or delivered • Import permits issued by DATCP for movement of fish into Wisconsin from another state • Fish health certificates <p>✓ You do not need to keep records on the sale of live fish/eggs sold directly to a consumer for food or bait.</p> |
| Moving fish | <p>✓ Health certificates are required to import live fish or fish eggs into Wisconsin from another state, or to move certain fish or fish eggs within Wisconsin.</p> <p>✓ Health certificates are issued for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual shipment of fish/fish eggs, which expires 30 days after it is issued. • A fish farm inspection, which expires one year after it is issued. <p>✓ Health certificates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be completed by a veterinarian or fish health inspector qualified to do fish health inspections, after a full inspection • Must include results from a qualified laboratory for required disease testing • Must be sent to us within 7 days after completion • Are available by calling 608-224-4887 |
| Importing fish | <p>✓ Importing non-native species of non-ornamental fish, such as tilapia, requires DNR approval.</p> <p>✓ Import permits are required from the department to import live fish/fish eggs into Wisconsin from another state if the fish/fish eggs are either coming from or going to the wild. If you register your fish farm, you may import fish/fish eggs from a fish farm in another state without an import permit as long as you have a health certificate.</p> |
| Using pesticides | <p>✓ You need to be certified by the Agricultural Resource Management Division of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection to apply restricted-use pesticides to destroy aquatic plants, microorganisms, or other pests. This is in addition to your fish farm registration. Call 608-224-4500 for information about pesticide applicator certification.</p> <p>✓ There may be other federal, state or local regulations for use of pesticides.</p> |
| Processing and selling fish for food | ✓ To process or sell fish for human food, you will need to work with a food safety inspector and obtain appropriate licenses from the Food Safety Division of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Call 608-224-4700. |

For more information

- ✓ Rules and statutes
 - Animal Health statute: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/statutes/Stat0095.pdf> (see 95.60)
 - Animal diseases and movement rule:
https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/atcp/010/10 (see subchapter VIII)
- ✓ DATCP aquaculture veterinarian
Dr. Myron Kebus, 608-224-4876, myron.kebus@wisconsin.gov
- ✓ DATCP aquaculture license/permit program associate
608-224-4887, DATCPfishfarms@wisconsin.gov
- ✓ University of Wisconsin aquaculture specialists
 - Northern Region: **Ron Johnson**, 814-515-2570, ron.johnson@ces.uwex.edu
 - Southern Region: **Jim Held**, 920-648-2902, jaheld@wisc.edu
- ✓ DATCP food safety information
608-224-4700, DATCPfood@wisconsin.gov
- ✓ DATCP pesticide information
608-224-4500, DATCPagriculture@wisconsin.gov



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