



Redclaw Crayfish

Cherax quadricarinatus: an exciting new species for aquaculture

A tropical crayfish

Redclaw, which is a kind of crayfish or crawfish, is a freshwater crustacean that looks very similar to a lobster. It is native to the relatively warm northern regions of Australia and is naturally found in a variety of aquatic ecosystems including creeks, rivers, and lakes. While commercially important crayfishes generally live in semi-temperate environments, the redclaw is an exception as it is truly adapted to the tropics with an ideal water temperature of 28-30°C.

Better than shrimps and prawns

The redclaw is valued in the culinary world both for its flavor and appearance. It has the visual appeal of a lobster and taste somewhere between freshwater prawns and marine shrimp. Compared to marine shrimp, the redclaw meat is more tender and succulent. Compared to freshwater prawns, it has the advantage of a much more uniform size and a higher meat yield. When cooked, redclaws are bright red in color which is typical of premium crustaceans.

Truly fresh and healthy

A key advantage of redclaw over shrimps and prawns is that it is perfectly suited for live marketing. When provided a moist environment, redclaws can be kept alive and healthy for 72 hours, making it a truly fresh seafood. The redclaw compared to shrimps and prawns is also low in the food chain and does not require animal protein. It is therefore a favorable crop for organic or integrated farming. It also contains much lower cholesterol making it among the healthiest of the gourmet crustaceans.

An ideal species for small-scale aquaculture

A hardy species, the redclaw can thrive on a range of farming environments and can be farmed upland or lowland. It is an omnivore which means it is not choosy on its food. It readily reproduces in captivity so farmers can produce their own hatchlings. Because it can be taken out of water for extended periods, it is very cost-effective to transport and market. Best of all is that it is a high-value niche product which is good for small farmers.

... and for recreational fishing too!

Fishing for redclaws, or better known as yabbying in Australia, makes a perfect attraction to farm resorts. Yabbying involves using a simple baited trap that lets the animal in but not out. The more traps you use, the more redclaws you catch...a truly unique and rewarding outdoor experience for the family and for the lazy fisherman. Set a record catch — in the “wild” redclaws are known to grow over 400 grams! Release the day’s catch back in the pond, or release it in the pot for a sumptuous crawfish boil.

An opportunity to be a pioneer redclaw farmer

Redclaw farming is very new in the Philippines and therefore offer pioneers an opportunity to do good business by supplying high-end restaurants, hotels, and resorts a gourmet seafood that is nearly as good to a lobster. Unlike marine lobsters, however, redclaws being farmed animals can be produced predictably and sustainably all year round. Redclaws are typically harvested at a size of 60-120 grams after 8 months of culture. It can be farmed extensively in dams or at high densities in ponds, with yields ranging from 300 - 4,000 kg per hectare at a production cost of P250-350 per kilo. If you have land with bountiful and clean freshwater, the redclaw may just be the perfect crop for you.

For more information, contact Cruz Aquaculture Corporation at tel. no. (034) 434-7263 or (034) 435-4107, or e-mail at cruzcorp@mozcom.com.