

## The integrated study for improvement the potential of the hybrid *Pangasius* culture for exportation

### Abstract

The *Pangasius* culture in Thailand mostly operated by small-scale farmers and the most of production is for domestic consumption. In 2005, the Thai government had launched the first pilot project for promotion the exportation of hybrid *Pangasius* cultured in the cage in the Mekong river in Nakhon Phanom province Northeast of Thailand. The evaluation of potentiality and constraint of Thailand for culture and exportation of this species had been conducted by interview all stakeholders (farmers, dealers, processors, exporters and policy makers).

The artificial cross breeding of female *P. hypophthalmus* and male *P. bocourti* had been successfully which produced more seed and higher survival rate, the commercial name for exportation of this species is Thai Panga and local name is Swai Mong. The texture quality is likely same as *P. bocourti*.

There were nearly 400 farmers had joined the first phase of project (2005-2006) and second phase (2007-2008) which government provided all production inputs. The culture period was 11 months which obtained around 800 g of fish. With the cooperation of the exporter, there was 11 tons of fish fillet had been exported to USA in 2006. All production, processing and exportation processes were undertaken by government incorporated with the exporter, the farmers were paid 5 Baht/fish (33 Baht = 1US\$) for culture. Once the farmers have to invest by themselves, there are many factors which highly concerned by farmers i.e. production cost, culture period and farm gate price while the processing plants and exporters are ready to invest in the new product. Thailand has high potentiality to success in exportation of this new species as the private sectors of Thai processing plant has long experience and widely accepted by the international consumers. To apply the conventional aquaculture practice for promotion the culture of this species will lead to the loss of farmer as the high price of pellet feed (22-25 Baht/kg) and the FCR is 1.5-1.7 while the processing plant can afford buying fish at 30-35 Baht/kg. It is good idea that the government want to increase the income of poor farmers of Northeast which have the lowest GDP in the country, but the extension program need to be carefully considered from all stakeholders. As the small scale farmers which are scarce in capital and knowledge of culturing management need more support from government so most of stakeholders suggested to set up the community enterprise which compose of hatchery, feed manufacturing and processing plant

otherwise the farmer will be in the same track as most of small-scale Tilapia farmer who always lost while the benefit is in the hand of feed company.

**Keywords :** Hybrid Pangasius, Thai Panga