

AGRI-FACTS

Practical Information for Alberta's Agriculture Industry

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Fish Culture Licences

Alberta Agriculture and Food (AF) issues three types of fish culture licences under the authority of the *Alberta Fisheries Act* and its supporting regulations. Application forms are available at: www.agric.gov.ab.ca by clicking on the Program & Services tab and scrolling down to Licences. You can also call 780-427-5083.

A **Recreational Fish Culture Licence** allows the holder to keep cultured fish, as specified, in the water body named on the licence. This licence is intended for the recreational, non-commercial use of the applicant. Fish cannot be sold under the authority of this licence. Recreational Fish Culture licences are \$10 per year or \$50 for a five-year period. New applicants, or applicants who have allowed their licence to lapse for one year or more, will also be required to pay an additional \$42.00 to have the water body inspected. The water body must be inspected to ensure it is situated on privately-owned land and isolated from other water to the point that stocking fish will not adversely affect the environment or native fish.

A **Commercial A Fish Culture Licence** allows the holder to sell as well as keep cultured fish as specified on the licence. This licence is intended for those operating a business involving the sale of cultured fish. The annual fee is \$75.

A **Commercial B Fish Culture Licence** also allows the holder to sell and keep cultured fish; however, the licenced premises are limited to "contained waters." Contained waters are waters held in a man-made aquarium or other impervious container that is normally housed within a building, OR waters held in a man-made reservoir that isolates the water in it from flowing into other water sources, is completely lined with an impervious material and is no larger than 55 square metres (600 square feet). Commercial B licences cost \$150 annually.

What kinds of fish can I stock in my pond or fish culture facility?

Table 1 shows the species of cultured fish eligible under each licence. Goldfish and Koi are considered cultured fish only if they are possessed at a location that is not within a person's principal residence and the fish are being kept for the purpose of selling wholesale. The Aquaculture Section will not issue a licence for any species of fish not included in Table 1.

Table 1. Cultured fish eligible for licencing

Recreational & Commercial 'A'	Commercial 'B'
Arctic char	Atlantic salmon
Rainbow trout	Chinook salmon
Brook trout	Coho salmon
Brown trout	Sockeye (Kokanee) salmon
Triploid grass carp	Freshwater prawn
	Goldfish
	Koi
	Tilapia
	Bigmouth Buffalo fish
	American eel
	Apple snail

I have enough fish in my pond and do not need to purchase more this year. Is it necessary for me to renew my licence when it expires?

Yes, a valid licence is not only necessary to purchase fish, but is required as long as you hold fish in your water body.

How long does it take to obtain a licence?

First-time applications will usually be inspected and processed within two weeks. Allow one more week for delivery of the licence by mail. Unfavourable weather or poor field conditions may delay this process.

Will I require any other licences?

In some instances, it will be necessary to obtain a licence to use and divert water before a fish culture licence can be issued. For more information, please call Alberta Environment, Water Approval at (780) 427-5296 in Edmonton.

What is the restricted area?

There is one geographic area in Alberta where special conditions apply due to the sensitive nature of the surrounding natural fisheries. An area roughly described as the south-west quarter of the province is restricted to stocking Rainbow trout or triploid grass carp only.

As seen in Figure 1, the boundary of the restricted area is irregular. If you are unsure as to the location of your water body in relation to this zone, please contact the licencing coordinator at 780-427-5083 for more information.

Can I licence a pond on public land that I lease from the government?

No, licences will not be issued for ponds located on public land. You can, however, receive a licence for a pond located on land that you lease if the land is privately owned.

Can I move native fish, caught in other water bodies, to my pond?

No, it is illegal to take, use or attempt to use live fish or fish eggs taken from public water for stocking a fish culture premise.

Can I licence a pond that is owned jointly by me and my neighbour?

Yes, but first your neighbour must sign the application form giving his/her consent to allow you to operate a fish culture facility.

For more information, contact the Aquaculture Section at 403-381-5170.



Figure 1.