Developing Countries Farm Radio Network

Pack 14, Item 14

Type: Script

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**Raising fish in the paddy field, part 2: Rearing no-cost baby fish** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Information on subject areas contained in this item was requested by DCFRN participants in Argentina, Bangladesh, Burundi, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Fiji, Ghana, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Liberia, Maldives, Mexico, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Republic of China (Taiwan), Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, and Uruguay.

Presenter: George Atkins

Interviewee: Wung Ing Gen, a farmer, An Yuan Commune, Ninghua County, Fujian Province, People's Republic of China

Interpreter: Lei Qi Shi, Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Fuzhou, People's Republic of China

**Special notes**

1. The information in this item is only applicable to farmers who grow rice in small, shallow water paddy fields. It was obtained in an interview with a rice grower beside his small spawning and fish rearing ponds by his paddy field in China. Fish could not be raised, of course, in paddy fields where poison chemical pesticides are used that would be harmful tofish or to people who later eat them.

2. In this item, the farmer being interviewed speaks only Chinese so all English language answers to questions are provided by the interpreter. In most cases, I repeat the information insomewhat different wording. I have done this to emphasize the essential information from the interview as clearly as possible to pass on to your farmers.

Before using the information in this item, please read the notes at the end concerning related DCFRN items.

**Suggested introduction**

We at this radio station are part of a worldwide information network that gathers farming information from developing countries all over the world. It's the Developing Countries Farm Radio Network, sponsored by Massey Ferguson and the University of Guelph, and financially supported by the Canadian International Development Agency and by many interested Canadians.

Through this Network, we bring you information on ways to increase food supplies for your family, or to sell—ways that other farmers have used successfully.

Once again today our subject is raising fish in the paddy field. Here's George Atkins.

**ATKINS:** Not long ago on this program, we heard about why and how Wung Ing Gen, a farmer in China, raises fish in his paddy field. We also heard that the kinds of fish he raises are grass carp and Chinese carp. When I asked him, through my interpreter Lei Qi Shi, where he gets his young fish every year, he told me that he doesn't have to buy them. Instead of harvesting all the adult fish for food for his family or to sell, he keeps a few of them over winter for spawning (breeding) in the springtime. Here's how he does it.

**LEI:** After harvesting his second crop, he keeps deeper water in the paddy field for over winter. And he keeps adult fish in there for the winter.

**ATKINS:** So the adult fish stay in the same place where theyhave grown up until the spring. How many would he leave in that paddy field?

**LEI:** About 20 to 30 adult fish in the original paddy field.

**ATKINS:** These then are the adult fish that he uses in the springtime for spawning, to produce his new crop of baby fish for next season.

For spawning, though, Mr. Wung has to prepare a small but very clean spawning pond where the adult fish breed. He told me it has to be dug in fresh soil and dried out completely by the sun. The soil has to be "sunburned," he said, before putting fresh water into it. Then I asked,

“How big is the spawning pond?”

**LEI:** The pond is about 6 square metres (7 square yards) (8 feet by 8 feet).

**ATKINS:** And how deep will the water be in the pond when he puts the fish in there to spawn?

**LEI:** About 50 to 60 centimetres (20 to 24 inches). He puts water in when it's time to spawn.

**ATKINS:** So when he first digs it, there's no water in it. Thenafter it's completely dry from the sun, he puts water in it for the spawning.

**LEI:** Yes, he puts fresh flowing water into the pond.

**ATKINS:** Now remember the adult fish he kept over winter from last season? From them, Mr. Wung selects eight or 10 of his best male and female fish for spawning. And how long will he leave them in this special spawning pond?

**LEI:** One day for mating.

**ATKINS:** So after they've been in for one day for mating, he takesthem out. Then how long is it before he has baby fish in this special pond?

**LEI:** It only takes three days and then the new, very young fish will come out of the eggs.

**ATKINS:** How big are they at the beginning?

**LEI:** Very, very small. As thin as a hair, black and red in colour.

**ATKINS:** So they're as thin as a hair and how long?

**LEI:** About half a centimetre (1/4 inch).

**ATKINS:** OK, then he has these tiny fish. How long do they grow in this special pond?

**LEI:** After three days in this special pond, they become a little bigger—about 1 centimetre (almost 1/2 inch) long.

**ATKINS:** But now, Mr. Wung said the baby fish have to be moved from the special spawning pond into what he calls a "nursery pond."

**LEI:** The nursery pond has about 30 centimetres (1 foot) depth of water.

**ATKINS:** 30 centimetres (1 foot) of water and what is the size ofthis nursery pond?

**LEI:** From 1 square metre to 6 square metres (1 square yard to 7 square yards).

**ATKINS:** Now, we are standing beside this nursery pond and I can hear water running in the ditch beside. Also, I notice water is running into this nursery pond and out of it. Is this necessary for this kind of pond with water running in and also running out?

**LEI:** Yes.

**ATKINS:** For how long then are the baby fish kept in this pond?

**LEI:** About two weeks before putting the young fish into the paddy field.

**ATKINS:** So what size are they then after two weeks in the nursery pond?

**LEI:** About 2 centimetres (3/4 inch) after 14 days in the nursery pond before putting into the paddy field.

**ATKINS:** Thank you very much, Wung Ing Gen, here in Ninghua County in Fujian Province in the Peoples' Republic of China—and thank you Lei Qi Shi for interpreting for us here in China.

Serving Agriculture, the Basic Industry, this is George Atkins.

**Notes**

1. This is the second of two items in this package on the subject of raising fish in the paddy field. Please use the information in Item 13 (Part 1) and in Item 14 (Part 2) in the proper sequence.

2. It should be noted that in some places, young fish can be obtained from government or privately-owned agencies. However, farmers themselves who get the first fish they raised from a neighbour, a fish hatchery agency or from streams, lagoons, or lakes can rear fish as described in this item.

**Information source**

Wung Ing Gen, People's Republic of China.