

## **Vietnam, Pangasius exports fall despite higher sales to US**

Vietnamese pangasius exports generated USD 616.6 million in the first five months of 2015, representing a decline of 9.6 per cent year on year.

In the analysed period, seafood exports reached a total value of USD 2.46 billion, accounting for a 17.2 per cent drop compared to last year, according to statistics from the Viet Nam Association of Seafood Entrepreneurs (VASEP).

VASEP informed that there was an increase in the demand of the country's pangasius exports from one of its major markets – the United States (US). The value of shipments to this country grew by 6.3 per cent in the first five months of 2015, with a share of 21.8 per cent of the total exports of this species.

It was followed by the European Union, which purchased Vietnamese pangasius for USD 118.9 million between January and May this year, which represented a 19.3 per cent of the total value and a 15.6 per cent decline year on year.

In the January-May period, the third biggest importer of Vietnam's pangasius was the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which imported catfish for a value of USD 57.9 million, representing a 2.7 per cent decrease year on year.

VASEP statistics indicate that in May this year only, Vietnam's pangasius exports were worth USD 134 million in income, accounting for a 1.4 per cent fall over the fifth month in 2014.

The US was the biggest importer with purchases for USD 27.2 million, 17.3 per cent higher than those in May last year and equivalent to 20.3 per cent of the total value. It was followed by the EU (18.7 per cent of the total), China and Hong Kong (9.8 per cent) and ASEAN countries (9.3 per cent).

Currently, US catfish producers are awaiting the final ruling that could move catfish inspection from the US Food and Drug Administration to the US Department of Agriculture.

These farmers complain that they continue to battle competition from Vietnam and China, which export catfish or catfish-like products that are less expensive but not as closely monitored for food safety issues as US-grown fish.

Source : <http://fis.com/fis/worldnews/worldnews.asp?l=e&ndb=1&id=77808>