2007 University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff Combined Research and Extension Plan of Work

Reduce Losses Due to Catfish Diseases

V(B). Program Knowledge Area(s)

1. Program Knowledge Areas and Percentage

- 311 100% Animal Diseases

V(C). Planned Program (Situation and Scope)

1. Situation and priorities

The profitability of catfish farming is impacted by reduced fish growth and survival attributable to catfish diseases. Disease losses can account for over $7 million a year in Arkansas. Spread of the catfish trematode has been a growing concern as well as columnaris infections. Biosecurity initiatives are expected to prevent diseases and reduce losses by maintaining fish health. Priorities: 1. To provide swift and accurate diagnosis of diseases, 2. To determine the impact and prevalence of catfish diseases, 3. To concentrate effort on the control and eradication of catfish trematodes, and 4. To promote biosecurity in the catfish industry.

V(D). Planned Program (Assumptions and Goals)

1. Assumptions made for the Program

The estimates of disease losses (USDA/NASS) are accurate. That research showing significant impacts from small numbers of trematodes is correct. That the best management options will continue to be the monitoring and eradication of infested snail populations. That there is an economic incentive for greater biosecurity.

2. Ultimate goal(s) of this Program

Farmers will manage their own pathogen and vector control programs that will effectively prevent losses from catfish trematodes and other diseases.

V(F). Planned Program (Activity)

1. Activity for the Program

Research will be conducted to determine the distribution of catfish trematodes and their impact on fish growth and survival and to assess the efficacy of trematode treatment methods. Extension programs will provide catfish disease diagnostic services, conduct field studies of trematode distribution and conduct education programs on trematode control.