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Cobia feed off Puerto Rico

COBIA (*Rachycentron canadum*) enjoy a feed in submerged SeaStation offshore cages run by Snapperfarm Inc off Puerto Rico. As reported last month in FFI ('US Marine Fish Breakthrough') tens of thousands of these cobia and mutton snapper (*Lutjanus analis*) were successfully reared at the ACFK hatchery in Florida, USA, then shipped to the cages.

Snapperfarm is developing an offshore demonstration project in Puerto Rico with technological support from the Aquaculture Program of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, and assistance of Puerto Rico Industrial and Development Corporation.

Cobia are extremely fast growers, reaching 6 to 8kg in just one year!



Photo: Joe Ayvazyan

Artemia harvest 'terrible'

AS FFI WENT to press, most artemia harvesters on Great Salt Lake in Utah, USA – the world's biggest source of the brine shrimp – were reporting difficulty capturing cysts.

One of the reasons is the weather, according to W Clay Perschon, Great Salt Lake Ecosystem Project Leader with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR).

The season began on October 1, and up to October 30 a total of 14,380,309lb, or 6522.9 tonnes, of biomass had been harvested. This included 7,816,966lb from the lake and 6,563,343lb from the beach.

Raw biomass includes cysts, empty shells, brine shrimp, algae and other material. Recovery of dry, processed cysts from the raw biomass varies annually, and this year is said to be very low.

David W Cole, president of Salt Creek Inc, one of the leading brine shrimp compa-

nies, described the harvest as "just terrible!"

He said: "The total artemia yield is high, but the recovery is low – about 7 to 15% of the total artemia ever seen. Costs are high because yields are low, low, low!"

Harvesting on the lake has continued through November. The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, which regulates the fishery, is continuing to sample the lake to advise harvesters.

"The prospect of significant reproduction during the fall is unlikely," says W Clay Perschon. "The weather has caused lake temperatures to approach 50degF."

"Production is slowed substantially when this happens. The numbers of all life stages of shrimp are diminishing." ■ FFI technical editor Wray reports next month from a visit to this huge saline lake. See also next month, page 24.