

Economic Contribution of Fish and Seafood Markets in Coastal Mississippi

In this issue, Dr. Posadas describes the economic contribution of the fish and seafood markets located in Coastal Mississippi. The Coastal Mississippi Region consists of three counties, namely: Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson Counties. The economic contribution of the fish and seafood markets shows their relative importance to the regional economy of Coastal Mississippi. These retail markets were threatened by the lingering impacts of the man-made disaster associated with the prolonged and twice opening of the Bonnet Carre spillway from February to April and May to July 2019. The extent of the economic impacts of the man-made disaster to the retail markets of Coastal Mississippi will take some time to assess. Instead, some benchmark data about the retail markets during the past five years are presented.

Employment and Wages, Salaries, and Earnings

Fish and seafood markets ([NAICS](#) sector 44522) comprises establishments primarily engaged in retailing fresh, frozen, or cured fish and seafood products. The industry directly hired an increasing number of employees from 48 jobs in 2014 to 80 jobs in 2017 in the three Coastal Mississippi Counties. However, the number of jobs directly created by the industry declined to 53 jobs, starting in 2018, and remained at that level in 2019 (Fig. 1).

The combined wages, salaries, and proprietor earnings of all the QCEW employees, non-QCEW employees, self-employed, and extended proprietors in the three Coastal Mississippi Counties averaged about \$17,600 during the past five years (Fig. 2). Higher combined wages, salaries, and proprietor earnings exceeding \$20,000 were estimated in 2018.

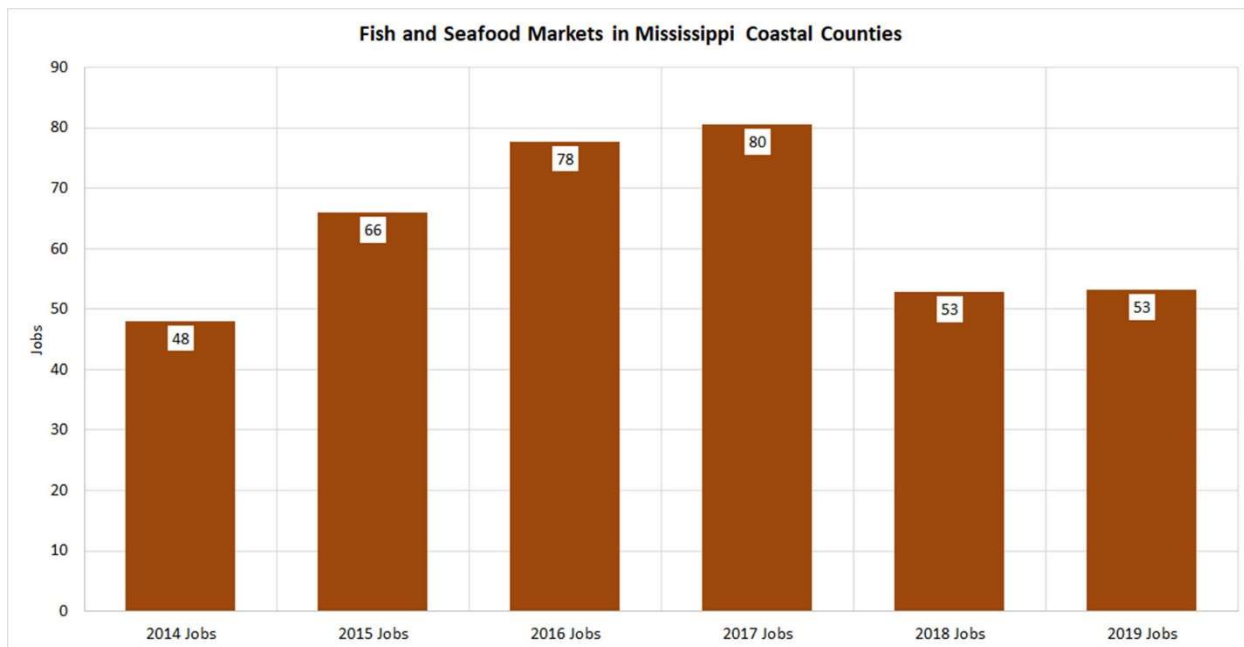


Figure 1. Annual Employment of QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, Self-Employed, and Extended Proprietors. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages ([EMSI](#), 2019).

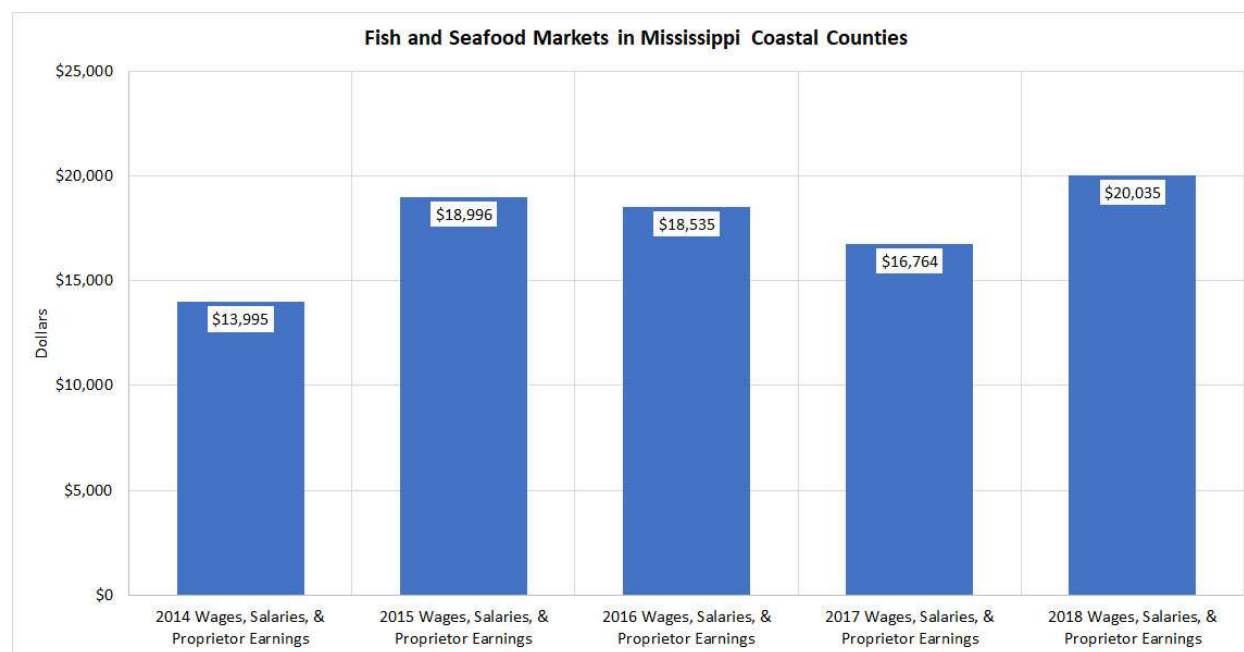


Figure 2. Average Earnings of QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, Self-Employed, and Extended Proprietors. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages ([EMSI](#), 2019).

Distribution of Workers by Gender

The 2018 industrial overview released by [EMSI](#) (2019) showed that among workers and owners in the three Coastal Mississippi Counties, 65 percent were male (Fig. 3). About 35 percent of the workers and owners were female.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Workers and Owners of Fish and Seafood Markets		
Industry Gender Breakdown	Coastal Mississippi	
Gender	2018 Jobs	2018 Percent
Males	34	64.9%
Females	19	35.1%
Total	53	100.0%

Figure 3. Distribution of QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, Self-Employed, and Extended Proprietors by Gender. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages ([EMSI](#), 2019).

Distribution of Workers by Age

The 2018 industrial overview released by [EMSI](#) (2019) showed that among workers and owners in the three Coastal Mississippi Counties are relatively young, averaging 48 years old (Fig. 4). Almost 32 percent of the workers and owners are 55 years old and above. The 45-55 years old workers and owners added 30 percent of the total. Over 19 percent belonged to the 35-44 years old age group. More than 18 percent of the workers and owners are below 35 years old.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Workers and Owners of Fish and Seafood Markets		
Industry Age Breakdown	Coastal Mississippi	
Age	2018 Jobs	2018 Percent
14-18	1	1.2%
19-24	1	1.0%
25-34	9	16.0%
35-44	10	19.3%
45-54	16	30.4%
55-64	11	21.4%
65+	6	10.7%
Total	53	100%
Average Age (yr)	47.74	

Figure 4. Distribution of QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, Self-Employed, and Extended Proprietors by Age Group. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages ([EMSI](#), 2019).

Distribution of Workers by Race or Ethnicity

The newly released industrial overview ([EMSI](#), 2019) also sorted workers and owners by race or ethnicity (Fig. 5). The majority of the workers are White (64.5%), followed by Hispanic or Latino (17.6%). The remaining workers and owners are Asian (9.1%) and Black or African American (8.8%).

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Workers and Owners of Fish and Seafood Markets		
Industry Race Breakdown	Coastal Mississippi	
Race/Ethnicity	2018 Jobs	2018 Percent
White	34	64.5%
Hispanic or Latino	9	17.6%
Asian	5	9.1%
Black or African American	5	8.8%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Two or More Races	0	0.0%
Total	53	100.0%

Figure 5. Distribution of QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, Self-Employed, and Extended Proprietors by Race or Ethnicity. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages ([EMSI](#), 2019).

Seafood Businesses Registered in MarketMaker

If you need an online database of local fish and seafood markets, you may use the search tool in [Mississippi MarketMaker](#) or other state [MarketMaker](#) programs. Almost 8,000 “food retailers - fish market” in the United States registered their business profiles in MarketMaker. You can sort the results alphabetically, by relevance, or by the distance to your current location.

By searching for “food retailers - fish market” in Mississippi, a total of 78 businesses are found registered in Mississippi MarketMaker. In the coastal counties of Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson, there are 31 “food retailers - fish market” registered in Mississippi MarketMaker (Fig. 6). These coastal seafood businesses are most likely to be directly impacted by the human-made disaster in 2019.

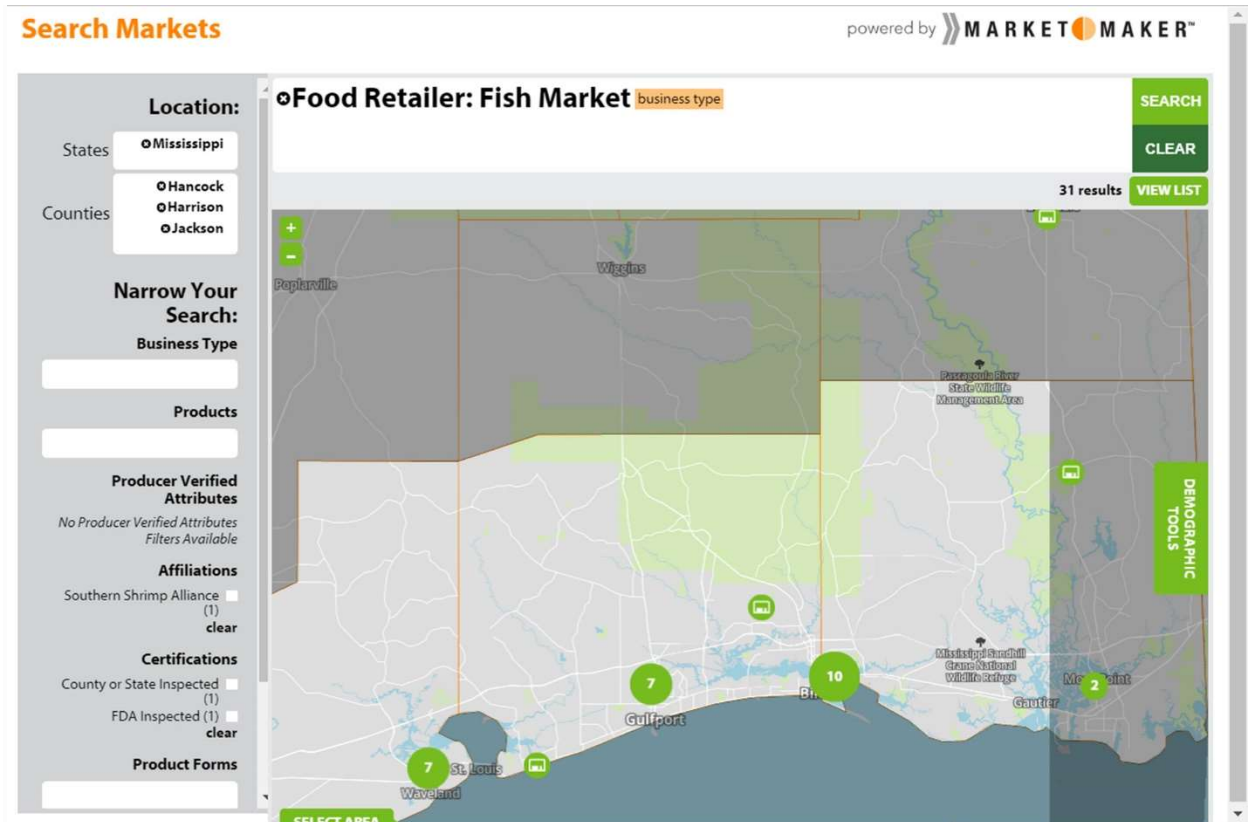


Figure 6. Map of the Locations of Fish and Seafood Markets in the Three Coastal Mississippi Counties ([Mississippi MarketMaker](#), 2019).

Gross Regional Product

The [Bureau of Economic Analysis](#) (2019) defines the gross domestic product (GDP) as the value of the goods and services produced in the United States. The gross regional product (GRP) is simply the GDP for the region of study. [EMSI](#) (2019) measures the GRP as the sum of total industry earnings, taxes on production and imports, and profits, less subsidies.

The gross regional product (GRP) in the three coastal counties generated by fish and seafood markets was estimated at \$1.72 million in 2018 ([EMSI](#), 2019). The bulk of the GRP consisted of earnings (68%), followed by taxes (18%), and property income (14%, Fig. 7).

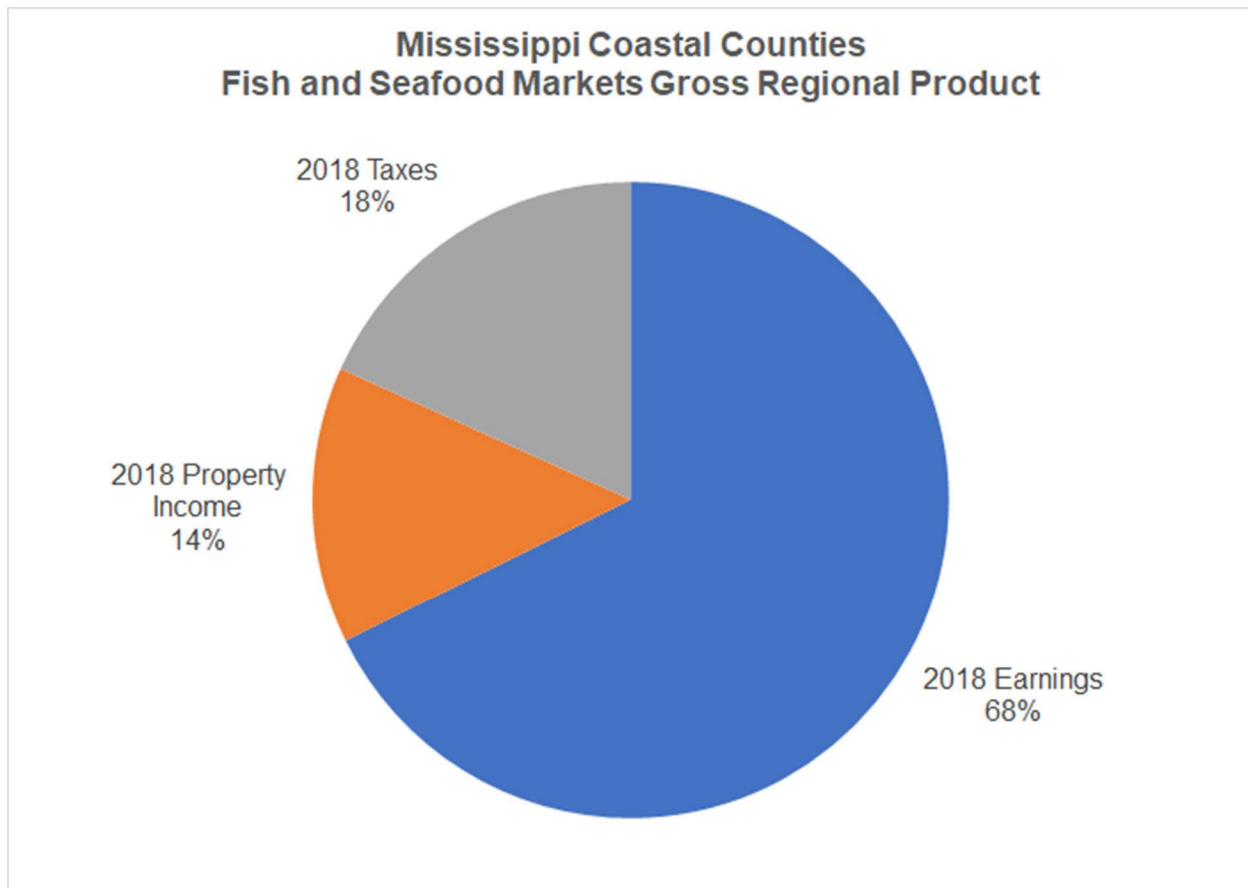


Figure 7. Distribution of Gross Regional Product in the three Coastal Mississippi Counties in 2018 by Source ([EMSI](#), 2019).

Disaster Implications

To save lives, properties, and the way of life in New Orleans and surrounding communities, the Bonnet Carre spillway was opened to release floodwater into Lake Pontchartrain and eventually into the Mississippi Sound. The livelihoods and way of life of the fish and seafood businesses and surrounding communities dependent on coastal tourism and the seafood industry are threatened by lingering effects of the man-made disaster associated with the prolonged and twice opening of the Bonnet Carre spillway since February to April and May to July 2019.

The massive volumes of freshwater which were dumped into the fertile fishery grounds of the Mississippi Sound brought with them harmful freshwater algae that bloomed all over the coast. Beaches were closed, and advisories were in place until Labor Day weekend and beyond. Massive losses in vital marine resources in Coastal

Mississippi disrupted commercial and recreational fishing activities. The disruption of the local supply chains of seafood products adversely affected local seafood processing, wholesaling, retailing, and restaurant activities.

This man-made disaster is a negative externality that causes consumer and producer losses. Market forces cannot create a system of payments for the offended parties. The government needs to intervene and compensate for the losses suffered by consumers and producers. The effects of the disaster confronting the Mississippi Sound will linger for some time, and the economic hardships will further erode the quality of life of coastal households, businesses, and communities.

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