having a fish kill exist for any pond with high nutrient loads. In addition, if fertilization is stopped, rooted plants may grow back in even greater abundance than existed before fertilization.

A fertilization program can also greatly increase the productivity of a pond. Fertilized ponds often maintain two to three times the standing crop (pounds per acre) of fish than unfertilized ponds. Such a program is not warranted unless a pond receives heavy fishing pressure. Contact your County Extension office or your regional Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission office for further information on pond fertilization specific to your local.

**Income from Your Pond**

The number of anglers in Florida is rapidly increasing due to the growing interest in fishing and Florida's rapidly growing population. Fishing pressure on our public waters is increasing, with many anglers looking for alternative places to fish. With increasing transportation costs, many anglers are looking for fishing opportunities closer to home. Fee fishing, paying for the right to fish and/or paying for any fish that are caught, is becoming popular among anglers.

There are three basic types of fee fisheries: long-term leasing, day leasing, and pay by the pound operations (see Florida Cooperative Extension Service Circular 809, "Fee Fishing in Florida"). Fishing rights to a private pond or lake can be leased on a long-term basis to an individual or group of individuals such as is done with hunting or grazing leases. Management of the pond is often the responsibility of the lessee. Day leasing involves collecting a daily user fee from the fisherman. Pond management is the responsibility of the operator, who may stock the pond with catchable-size fish, such as channel catfish, on an occasional basis. Normally, however, only those fish that are produced within the pond through natural reproduction are made available to the angler. Generally, largemouth bass-bluegill ponds are used in day leasing operations. "Put and take" or "pay by the pound" fisheries involve stocking a pond with fish and then charging the fisherman for each fish that is caught. Consequently fish populations in this type of operation must be artificially maintained at high levels by regular stocking of catchable-size fish, usually channel catfish.

Fee fishing operations in Florida are rapidly increasing in number, but vary substantially in their success. Little is known as to why this variation occurs and what attracts anglers to these facilities.

**References**


