Farmers of the Year are chosen annually from a large field of many deserving catfish producers in the U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish Industry. Although it is a difficult task to select just one farmer from each of the top three catfish-producing states, those who are selected embody the spirit of the American farmer. All have made significant contributions to the U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish Industry.

Every year, The Catfish Institute (TCI) utilizes these individuals in various advertising campaigns. Each farmer is an important part of promoting U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish and raising public awareness of the quality and benefits of eating U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish. Roger Barlow, President of TCI said, “We want to provide a connection between the farm-raised catfish that people know and love and the hundreds of family farms that dot the southern United States where these fish are grown. The Catfish Farmers of the Year are the face of the American farmer producing an American product for the American consumer.”

Bill Kyser is Alabama’s 2014 Catfish Farmers of the Year. Bill, who graduated from Auburn University’s fisheries program, is a second-generation catfish farmer. His father built the first commercial grow-out ponds in Hale County, Alabama in the 1960s. Bill has been involved in almost every area of the catfish industry – from owning a hatchery to growing food-sized fish. His latest endeavor is Alabama Protein Products, a company that converts waste products from processing plants into a nutritious animal protein meal. Bill and his wife Beverly have two sons, Townsend and Ashley, who also work on the family’s 800-acre catfish farm. Including the grandchildren, there are four generations of Kysers who have been involved in the catfish industry.

**Sauce:** MIX sauce ingredients together in saucepan and simmer until melted. BASTE on fish while grilling.

**Fish:** SPRAY grill generously with cooking spray. DIP catfish in vegetable oil. SPRINKLE cavities with salt and place catfish on grill. COOK over medium coals (300° F to 325° F on a gas grill), for one hour, or until golden brown. BASTE often.

**Kyser BBQ Catfish**

| 12 (7-9-oz) whole U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish | 3 oz Durkee’s Famous Sandwich & Salad Sauce |
| Vegetable cooking spray | 1 cup lemon juice |
| Vegetable oil | 1 tbsp salt |
| 2 tsp Worcestershire sauce | 2 tsp horseradish |
| Basting Sauce: | Tabasco sauce to taste |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BILL KYSER</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 lb oleo margarine</td>
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<td>3 oz Durkee’s Famous Sandwich &amp; Salad Sauce</td>
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**Catfish Allison**

*Rick Moyer*  
**SERVES 6-8**

- 6-8 U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish Fillets
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ½ cup butter or margarine, softened
- 6 tbsp mayonnaise
- 6 green onions, chopped fine
- ½ tsp Worcestershire sauce
- Generous dash Tabasco sauce

**PLACE** cheese, butter, mayonnaise, onion, Worcestershire and Tabasco in a bowl and mix thoroughly. **POACH** catfish fillets in lightly simmering water for 4 to 5 minutes, or until thoroughly cooked. **GENTLY** take fillets out of water and set aside to drain.

**PLACE** fillets into lightly greased baking dish. **COVER** each fillet with approximately 3 tablespoons cheese mixture and place under broiler until mixture browns – about 2 to 3 minutes. **CAREFULLY** lift fillets from baking dish and place on individual plates, spooning pan juices over each serving. **GARNISH** with fresh chopped green onions if desired.

Ricky Moyer is Mississippi’s 2014 Catfish Farmer of the Year. Ricky received a degree in fisheries from Michigan State University and a master’s degree in aquaculture from Auburn University. In 1985, he served as crew leader at the Auburn Research Station and Farm. After graduating from Auburn, Rick worked as hatchery manager for Austin Fish Farms. In 1990, he started Quiver River Aquaculture as a small hatchery/fingerling operation. Since then, Rick has cultured all sizes of catfish. In addition, he developed his own selection and breeding program, and his catfish operation has grown to more than 500 water acres. Rick and his wife Derenda have two children, Blake and Breanna.

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**JK’s Catfish Tacos**

*Steve Kueter*  
**SERVES 6**

- 6 (3-4-oz) U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish Fillets
- ½ red onion, sliced
- ½ red bell pepper, sliced
- 2 limes
- 1 lemon
- 2 tbsp mayonnaise
- Olive oil
- Corn tortillas, steamed

**PREHEAT** oven to 375° F. **SLICE** red onion and red pepper, set aside. **BRUSH** catfish fillets with olive oil, then sprinkle both sides of catfish fillets with chili powder and garlic powder. **PLACE** seasoned catfish fillets in roasting pan with rack or broiling pan. **COVER** fillets with sliced onion and pepper. Bake for 20 minutes or until fish becomes flaky.

**TO SERVE,** cut fillets in half lengthwise to better fit tortillas. **SQUEEZE** lemon and limes over catfish and top with citrus slaw. **NOTE:** Black beans and rice compliment this dish nicely.

Arkansas’s 2014 Catfish Farmer of the Year is Steve Kueter. Steve is from Paragould, Arkansas, and is a third-generation catfish farmer. He has been involved in catfish farming his entire life. Steve’s grandfather built a 15-acre pond in 1954 with the intention of irrigating rice. In time, the pond was converted to a pay lake and the start of the family’s long history with catfish farming began. Steve, along with his seven siblings and father, inherited the farm in the early 1970s. Steve worked on the farm while he was pursuing a degree in wildlife management at Arkansas State University. Steve and his wife Emily were married in 1990 and began working to purchase full ownership of the farm. The operation now includes over 800 acres, along with baitfish, tackle and a hand-dressed retail store. Steve and Emily have three children, Julia, Sarah and Benjamin.

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**JK’s Citrus Slaw**

*Steve Kueter*  
**SERVES 6**

- 1 bag angel hair coleslaw
- ½ red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 orange, peeled and chopped

**MIX** all ingredients together and chill.

**TIP:** Use a paring knife to wedge orange over slaw mixture to ensure juice is mixed into slaw.

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