

Packing and transportation

Packing density is determined on the basis of the distance to be covered. If travel time is less than an hour, 30,000 fry can be transported in 40 l of aerated water. Five hundred PL of 1 cm may be transported per litre of water in aluminium or earthen pots for 1½ hour-journeys. If transport takes more than 16 hours by land, oxygenated plastic bags should be used.

Transport in plastic bags

- Take a 45 x 80 cm bag, put some water in it and examine it to see if there is any leakage. (If there is, discard the bag.)
- The corners of the bag should be tied off with rubber bands to prevent animals getting trapped in them.
- Fill the bag with eight litres of water in which the PL were acclimatized.
- Put in 1000-2000 PL (at a rate of 125-250 PL/l of water).
- Fill two-thirds of the bag with oxygen so that it is fully inflated.
- The top of the bag should now be twisted, bent over, and sealed tightly with rubber bands.
- The inflated bag is then put in a carton after lining the bottom and sides of the box with styrofoam and ice mixed with rice husks. The carton should then be closed and sealed with tape. In this way, fry can be transported for 16-24 hours by land or air. In place of rice husks, wood shavings may also be used (1-1½ kg/kg of ice). A mixture of salt and ice (50 g/kg of ice) can also be used.

If transportation is by land, battery-operated fans along with ice may be used to keep the temperature low. If the post-larvae are to be transported by air, the carton must be leak-proof. An inner lining of plastic sheet or heavy-duty plastic bag will have to be inserted first.

Causes of transport mortality

- Lack of precautions while packing for transportation.
- Toxic levels of ammonia in warm packing water.
- Careless acclimatization by the pond operator.
- Excessive PL density.
- Faulty packaging.
- Transportation during moulting.

The hatchery operator should take pains to ensure that only healthy PL are sold. Direct sales to farmers are preferable to dealing with middlemen, because it enables direct feedback from the customer. As with any other business, it is the responsibility of the hatchery operator to ensure that the product is of the highest possible quality.

References

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