



pond. The original bass stocked as fingerlings must support the first 5 years or more of the pond's bass fishing. Therefore, harvest them lightly!

Light harvest means not removing more than 20-25 pounds of bass per acre each year. Record length and weight of all fish taken from the pond. (Recording information about caught-and-released fish also can be useful.) After the year's quota has been taken, release all further bass caught.

In the usual Michigan bass pond, it will be best to keep only those bass of 12-15 inches (30-43 cm). Throw back the over-15-inchers, as they are likely to have been the greediest, fastest-growing ones which reached that size first and should be kept as breeders to pass that trait along. Also, they will be the most efficient predators if panfish are present.

At any time that bass of a certain size appear thin and poorly-fed, harvest bass of that size more heavily. If a bass weighs less than 95% of the standard weight for its length, it is too thin. Use the graph on this page to check whether your bass are of standard weight.

#### Channel Catfish

If you stock channel catfish as fingerlings, start harvesting them in the second or third year after stocking when they have reached 9 to 10 inches. If the catfish population is one of those rare ones in Michigan that can sustain itself by natural reproduction, remove only 10-15 fish per acre each year. Usually, however, replenishment will be by annual restocking, and all fish caught above whatever size pleases the owner can be harvested.

Determining whether a bass or bluegill is of proper weight for its length is of proper weight for its length. Weigh the fish to the nearest half ounce or 10 grams, if less than 1/4 pound. If heavier, it may be weighed a bit less precisely. Measure length to the nearest eighth inch or millimeter. Plot weight on the vertical scale and length on the horizontal scale. Draw a horizontal line lightly with pencil at the fish's weight and a vertical line at its length. If the point where the two lines intersect is on the heavy curved line, the fish is of standard (or average) weight for its length. If the point lies above the curve, it is heavier than average. If it lies below the curve, the fish is underweight.