

A Thousand Years of Fish Farming History in the Czech Republic – Current Problems and Challenges

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The earliest records of fishponds, and by extension fish farming, in the Czech lands date back to the late 10th century. From the 11th century onwards, fishpond construction gradually expanded, particularly in connection with the establishment of monasteries. The spread of Christianity and the practice of fasting during the winter months contributed significantly to the development of fish farming in Central Europe. The golden age of Czech pond aquaculture spanned the period from the mid-15th to the early 17th century. However, the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) marked the beginning of a period of decline. This trend was further exacerbated by broader societal changes, including rural-to-urban migration and the general development of society. A revival of fish farming began in the second half of the 19th century. Over time, fish (particularly carp) became an integral part of the traditional Czech Christmas Eve dinner. During the 20th century, fish production increased severalfold. Today, however, the Czech fish farming sector faces a number of significant challenges, including low domestic fish consumption, a high proportion of live fish exports, predation by fish-eating predators, and recurrent drought.

