A small crop in the Atchafalaya River Basin is causing a rise in Louisiana crawfish prices.

“It has nothing to do with the meat boycott,” said Joe Calcagno of the Broadview Seafood Mart, 1468 N. Broad.

The real blame goes to the rising river water, which is flooding swamplands where crawfish grow. And an additional nickel that people are paying for a pound of crawfish this week will go to the fisherman as incentive pay, said Calcagno.

He added that as water moves in, it scatters crawfish, and they don’t ‘bite. Calcagno said catches have been reduced by 25 per cent.

Kenneth Lantz, crawfish biologist for the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, agreed that fewer crawfish have been caught lately; but he was not so definite about pinpointing a reason for higher prices. He said high water conditions may have impeded fishermen in working their nets. Lantz thinks that demand for crawfish may have grown in the past three weeks too.

March 30 a newspaper advertised live crawfish for 37 cents a pound. An April 6 ad listed the price at 35 cents a pound. The price of three pounds of boiled crawfish rose from $1.47 to $1.68 during the same period.