New regulations listed for alligator hides, meat

Manufacturers of leather goods from alligator hides are no longer required to obtain federal permits and the sale of alligator meat and other parts is no longer restricted to the state where the alligators are taken, according to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Jesse J. Guidry, department secretary, said the less restrictive regulations announced by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had been published in the November 25 Federal Register and were now effective.

He said alligator leather goods, meat and other parts of alligators, or items made from other parts of alligators, can now be sold nationwide, provided the sale is in accordance with the laws and regulations of the state in which the alligator taking occurs and those of the state in which the sale takes place.

"One problem Louisiana has faced in the past when it came to marketing this renewable wildlife resource," Guidry said, "was a shrinking market available for alligator hides due to the time involved in securing federal permits."

Elimination of the federal fabricator permit requirement now makes manufacturers more receptive to using alligator products. However, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service still requires buyers, dealers and tanners to obtain a federal permit prior to engaging in any commercial activity in regard to the American alligator.

Sale of alligator meat in the state for human consumption is regulated by the Louisiana Health Department and the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Shipment of alligator meat, whether in-state or out-of-state, must be labeled as alligator meat. Additionally, the weight of shipment, name of consignee and consignor, along with the health department permit number must appear on the package.

Persons shipping alligator parts other than the skins must label the package as alligator parts, identify the quantity, and provide the license number issued to that person by the wildlife department.

This information must...