State leads nation in seafood output

“Louisiana once again has led the nation in seafood production,” J. Burton Angelle, Sr., secretary of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, announced.

Citing preliminary statistics compiled by the National Marine Fisheries Service, Angelle said that in 1984 more than 1.9 billion pounds of seafood was landed in Louisiana.

More than 106 million pounds of shrimp was landed. This is the second highest shrimp output ever recorded in Louisiana, exceeded only by the 112 million pounds landed in 1981 and well above the 15-year average of 85.5 million pounds.

Louisiana led all other states in shrimp production, with more than 35 percent of the 301.8 million pounds landed in the United States.

The landings of 29.6 million pounds of blue crabs were the highest recorded since 1945, and the 13.5 million pounds of oyster meats has been exceeded in recent times only by the 13.7 million pounds landed in 1975. The Gulf region — principally Louisiana, with 51 percent of the region’s total — led the United States in the production of oyster meats.

Landings of menhaden reached the record level of 1.7 billion pounds for the second year in a row. More menhaden is caught in the United States than any other species, and Louisiana contributed well over half of the 2.9 billion pounds in 1984.

The dockside value of Louisiana’s 1984 landings exceeded $259 million, according to Angelle. As usual, shrimp was the most valuable fishery, accounting for $143 million of the total value to fishermen. The second most valuable fishery was menhaden, with landings valued at more than $68 million.