LA-AGRICULTURE

STRAWBERRY CROP IN
LOUISIANA ABOVE '45

BATON ROUGE, La., Feb. 16. (AP)
—Louisiana’s 1946 strawberry crop
is estimated by the USDA-LSU crop
reporting service to be 30 per cent
more than last year’s, but still about
four per cent below the 1935-44 aver-
age.

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Last year agricultural food production contributed $7 billion to Louisiana's economy

By PAT PARISH

After 285 years, the United States is purchasing Louisiana all over again. Consumers across the country have discovered that Louisiana products mean good food.

In New England, consumers buy flash-frozen crawfish at the supermarket. Californians can visit Cajun festivals, complete with Louisiana food products. Louisiana-style mixes and frozen entrees appear in kitchens throughout the country, and restaurateurs are buying Louisiana seasonings to spice up their menus.

Louisiana companies are both fueling the boom and responding to it by coming out with new products to augment their existing lines, and stepping up their marketing. This latter-day Louisiana purchase is a financial boon to the state. For instance, last year agricultural food production contributed $7 billion to the state economy.

The Louisiana seafood industry is on a roll," said Ken Roberts, marine economics specialist with the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service and the Seagrant Program. "People are interested in seafood and they're interested in eating it the way we like to prepare it," he said.

"Louisiana now has four No. 1's going for it," he said. In addition to being the No. 1 producer of both shrimp and crawfish, the state has recently become No. 1 in blue crab and oyster production, he said.

"A lot of people are going to be looking at us, naturally, for seafood supplies. And when they come looking, they find a lot more of our companies that are processing entrees," he said.

In addition to frozen entrees such as Frey's Cajun Classics that are marketed in the United States, Roberts said several Louisiana companies are now shipping prepared crawfish dishes to Sweden for sale in supermarkets.

The so-called Cajun craze is one factor in the expansion of Louisiana's seafood industry, but not the only one, Roberts said. "We have very progressive, well-organized people in the business now. Otherwise we wouldn't have been able to capitalize now (on the Cajun craze)."

Other industries have also profited from the nation's interest in Cajun cooking. The market for seasoning sauces (mainly hot pepper sauces) had remained stable for 10 years, then in the mid-1980s production increased more than 40 percent.

Catalogs selling Louisiana products are doing well. Community Coffee is projecting a 40 percent increase this coming...
Louisiana purchase

PEANUT PIE
1 cup sugar
2 eggs, beaten
1 tbsp. vanilla
Air Vierra Carré Fralise sauce
2 dashes, margarita
5. Mix all ingredients and pour into a 9-inch unbaked pie shell.
6. Bake 5 minutes at 490 degrees, reduce heat to 350 degrees.

MICROWAVE BLACKENED FISH PILLETS
Fillets of filet-fresh fish such as salmon, trout, red, or trout
Cajun Creole Microwave Blackened Seasoning
Melted butter, margarine, or vegetable spray
1. Brush fillets with melted butter or margarine or spray with vegetable spray.
2. Sprinkle seasoning on both sides of fish. Test small piece first to adjust for taste.
3. Arrange fillets with thickest parts toward the outside of the plate.

Cajun dressing makes a spicy flavoring for popcorn, onions, and green beans. The company offering is three varieties: seafood, chicken, and sausage.

A Cajun jambalaya mix has been added to the Louisiana Fish Products line, and B.F. Quick Cajun Loins.

1. Mix all ingredients and pour into a 10-inch unbaked pie shell.
2. Bake 5 minutes at 490 degrees, reduce heat to 350 degrees.
3. Bake 10 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in middle comes out clean.
4. Serve.

MICROWAVE BÉCHAMEL SAUCE
1 lb. of filet-fresh fish such as salmon, trout, red, or trout
Cajun Creole Microwave Blackened Seasoning
Melted butter, margarine, or vegetable spray
1. Brush fillets with melted butter or margarine or spray with vegetable spray.
2. Sprinkle seasoning on both sides of fish. Test small piece first to adjust for taste.
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