



## Packaging for export



*The snap-frozen fillets emerge at the end of the line in a cold room that is sealed off from the earlier stages of production. For Agifish, major export markets are Europe, the United States, Australia and Asia including Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, China and Taiwan. New markets include Mexico, South Africa and the Middle East. Unlike the slaughter, filleting and trimming teams, staff in the packaging rooms work two shifts a day.*







# Catch and Culture

Special insert

## Catfish Processing in Viet Nam

### Unloading the harvest



An Giang province is the "catfish capital" of the Mekong Delta and the riverside city of Long Xuyen is home to many processing plants. Live fish harvested from ponds, net-pen enclosures and river cages are often transported to factories by boat. At this Agifish facility in Long Xuyen, the fish are transferred from the dock in a 20 cm suction hose. A new hose being installed this year has the capacity to pump 25 tonnes of fish an hour.

PHOTOS: JOE GARRISON





## Slaughter and filleting



*Agifish opened Frozen Factory No. 9 at the end of 2006. Company officials said daily production capacity was scheduled to rise from the current level of 300 tonnes of raw product a day to 450 tonnes by September 2007. The morning shift starts at 6 a.m. Live catfish coming into the factory are slaughtered by hand and immediately transferred to pools of water where the blood is washed from them. The people who fillet the fish are highly skilled, having undergone three months of training prior to joining the filleting line.*





## Trimming and freezing



*By the time the fillets are ready for trimming, the skins have been removed by hand for most export markets with the notable exception of Hong Kong. Trimming involves removing the red meat and fat. This is done for most markets except Russia. The fillets are then graded according to flesh colour. White is premium quality followed by pink and yellow. The catfish are then arranged on conveyor belts leading to the Individual Quick Freezing machines.*