

# Cage culture of the giant freshwater prawn (*Macrobrachium rosenbergii*)



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# FOREWORD

Since the collaborative project on the Development of genetically improved strain of *Macrobrachium* started in 2003, SEAFDEC Aquaculture Department (SEAFDEC/AQD) has seen valuable progress in its research on the breeding, larval production, and grow-out of giant freshwater prawn.

With the rising development of technology for grow-out culture adopting various aquaculture farming systems, SEAFDEC/AQD, through its Binangonan Freshwater Station, introduces the successful rearing of *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* in cages in the inland waters of the Laguna de Bay. An aquaculture commodity with economic importance and high export potential, *M. rosenbergii* can likewise be polycultured with other species and be an alternative to tilapia and tiger shrimp. Indeed, this ground-breaking culture system opens a myriad of opportunities for freshwater fish farmers.

This publication covers essential information such as stocking density; packing and transport; feeding, culture, and health management; post harvest handling and processing; and economic analysis. We therefore hope that this manual on the cage culture of giant freshwater prawn will contribute to the advancement of the capacities of the industry's stakeholders and to sustainable aquaculture and economic development in the country and Southeast Asia.



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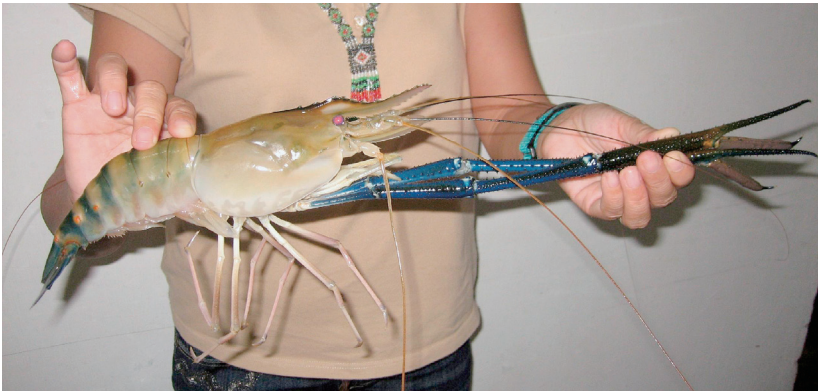




# INTRODUCTION

The giant freshwater prawn *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* is the biggest species among the genus *Macrobrachium* (Fig. 1). Although the larval development of this species requires brackishwater, this prawn thrives in freshwater upon metamorphosis to post-larva (PL). Wild *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* can be found in rivers in the Philippines. Traditionally, the pond culture system for this species is already widely practiced in Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and is integrated with rice farming in Vietnam, Bangladesh, and India. This manual will not describe grow-out culture in ponds since there are already a number of publications detailing the methods for this particular culture system.

Recently, SEAFDEC/AQD's Binangonan Freshwater Station has been successful in rearing this species of prawn in cages in Laguna de Bay. This manual focuses on this relatively novel culture system for *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* in the hope of providing an alternative species for freshwater culture in inland waters.



**Fig. 1.** The giant freshwater prawn *Macrobrachium rosenbergii*