

CONTINUOUS CULTURE OF CLADOCERAN, *MOINA* SP. FOR REARING OF POSTLARVAL PRAWNS

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A low-cost method for large scale culture of the fresh water cladoceran *Moina* sp. has been evolved. *Moina* is used in the frozen condition to feed the postlarvae of penaeid prawns reared at the NPCL of CMFRI.

The cladoceran is grown in 2 ton capacity circular plasticlined pools kept outdoors. Fresh water from a well or stored tap water is pumped into the pools and vigorously aerated. Organic fertilizers like cow-dung and groundnut oil cake along with urea and superphosphate are added to the pools. After one day, a culture of *Chlorella* (maintained in the NPCL) is added as inoculum. The following day adult *Moina* from a stock culture kept in the laboratory are added at a stocking density of 1 animal/litre of water. *Moina* population grows rapidly feeding on the *Chlorella* bloom which develops utilizing the added fertilizers and the

natural sunlight and reaches a concentration of 30,000 nos/litre in 7 days. There after the *Moina* are harvested every day morning when they swarm at the surface. Harvesting is carried out by skimming the surface water with a zooplankton net after stopping the aeration. They are washed in fresh water mixed with equal volume of 10% glycerol and frozen in a deep freezer into blocks.

In the event of decline of *Moina* population due to continued harvesting half the volume of water is replaced by fresh water and enriched by organic fertilisers to stimulate *Chlorella* bloom. The *Moina* culture revives in a few days and continuity of culture is maintained for over 3 months. The lobster sediment from the old pool which contains the resting eggs of *Moina* is dried and preserved to start new cultures when necessary. ○