

The Stacks' Paradise Trout Hatchery Still Going Strong After 100 Years

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regulations—all while at the mercy of the weather. She has essentially the same concerns that all livestock producers have.

Paradise Trout Hatchery began in 1902 when a group of men from northeast Pennsyl-

vania and New Jersey founded the stock-owned company. The original hatchery and raceways are still in use today, and through regular maintenance withstood the test of time.

In 1922 Martin's grandfather was hired as foreman at the hatchery. Some changes

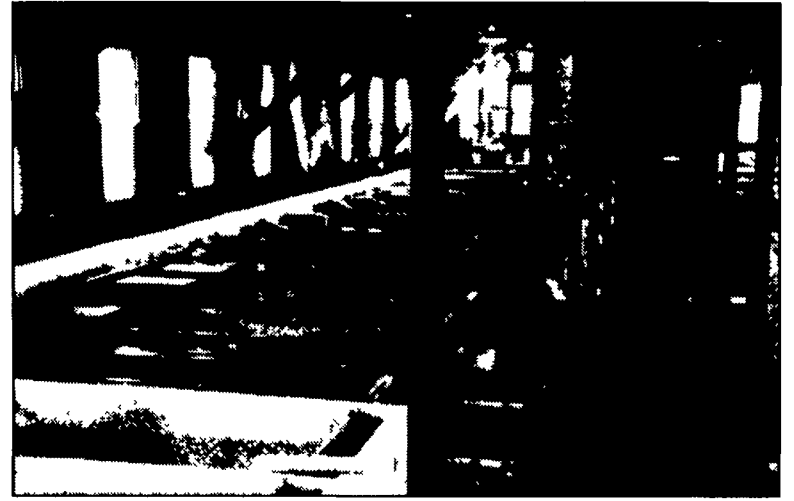
occurred over the years, and now the business is privately owned and operated. The Stack family has owned and operated the business for more than 75 years, where they raise Brook, Brown, and Rainbow trout for sale as stocking fish for private lakes and streams by individuals and

fishing clubs, and have also operated a fee fishing pond since 1968. There are four full-time employees with part-time help hired during the busy seasons.

The sale of live fish for stocking purposes is the largest portion of their business with sales and delivery to customers within a 90- to 100-mile radius. The family has also noted that the customers at their fee fishing pond also tend to originate from the same 100-mile radius. The location of the farm is ideal to tap into the tourist traffic that comes to the Pocono Mountains each summer.

Paradise was the first licensed hatchery in Pennsylvania. During the 1930s, it was one of the largest sellers of fish eggs, supplying customers throughout the world. Thus is the reason why the hatchery building is no doubt one of the largest you will see.

Doing everything the old-fashioned way—by hand—Martin does not bring outside fish into the operation. By harvesting the eggs from their own fish, she has avoided the



Inside of hatchery at Paradise Trout Hatchery shows the pools where young trout live after leaving the incubators. The walls of each pool are washed daily. Belt feeders that are used to feed the fish can be seen on top of the pools.

possibility of bringing diseases or health problems to their operation. The business raises approximately 150,000 pounds of trout per year from start to finish.

Harvesting is done by hand in late summer and early fall with the crew handling each fish to extract the eggs and sperm. They harvest the eggs from August through October, taking eggs once each week. The prime breeding age of the trout is two to three years with each pound of fish producing 1,000 eggs. Paradise has done some selective breeding by mating the best producing and growing fish to increase the quality of the fish they raise.

The eggs are in incubators for 30-40 days. The warmer the water, the quicker the eggs will hatch. Incubators used by Martin resemble trays similar to a chest of drawers.


The fish leave the incubators to live in the pools in the hatchery building. While some are still housed in the original rectangular cement pools, Martin said that the newer hard rubber circular pools are more to her liking. The movement of the fish in the circular pools resembles the natural swimming pattern of schools of fish in their natural habitat. At this age, the young trout need the cleanest, purest water available to insure healthy growth, so each day the water is lowered in the pools to allow the walls to be washed. Trout will not grow without clean, fresh water.


The colder the water, the healthier the fish will be, with the ideal water temperature for optimum feeding and growth at 50-55 degrees. Since

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Shown is one of the self feeders used at Paradise. Fish food is dropped into the water when the trout bump or tug on the string that hangs into the water.





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