



# Illinois Department of Natural Resources

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JB Pritzker, Governor  
Colleen Callahan, Director

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

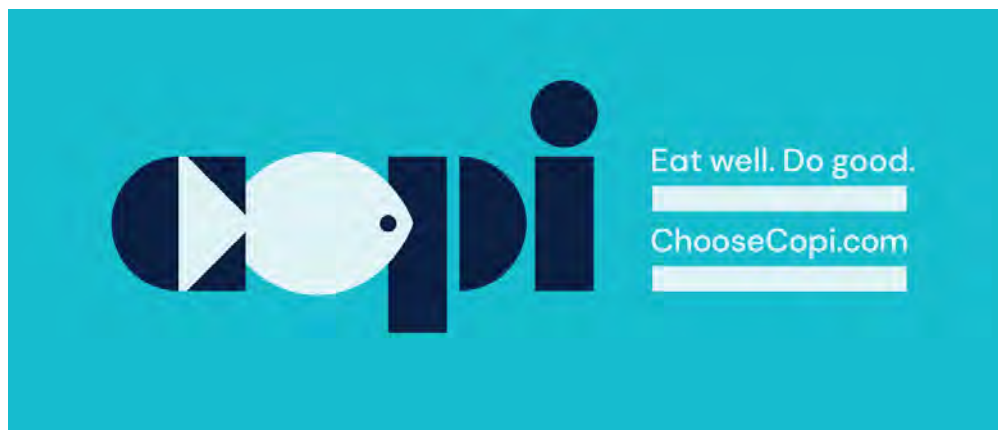
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## Choose Copi: Eat Well and Do Good *State of Illinois renames and rebrands Asian carp*

SPRINGFIELD – Following more than two years of consumer research and planning, the State of Illinois today unveiled “Copi,” the new name for Asian carp. ([Download videos, graphics, logos and photos for media](#))



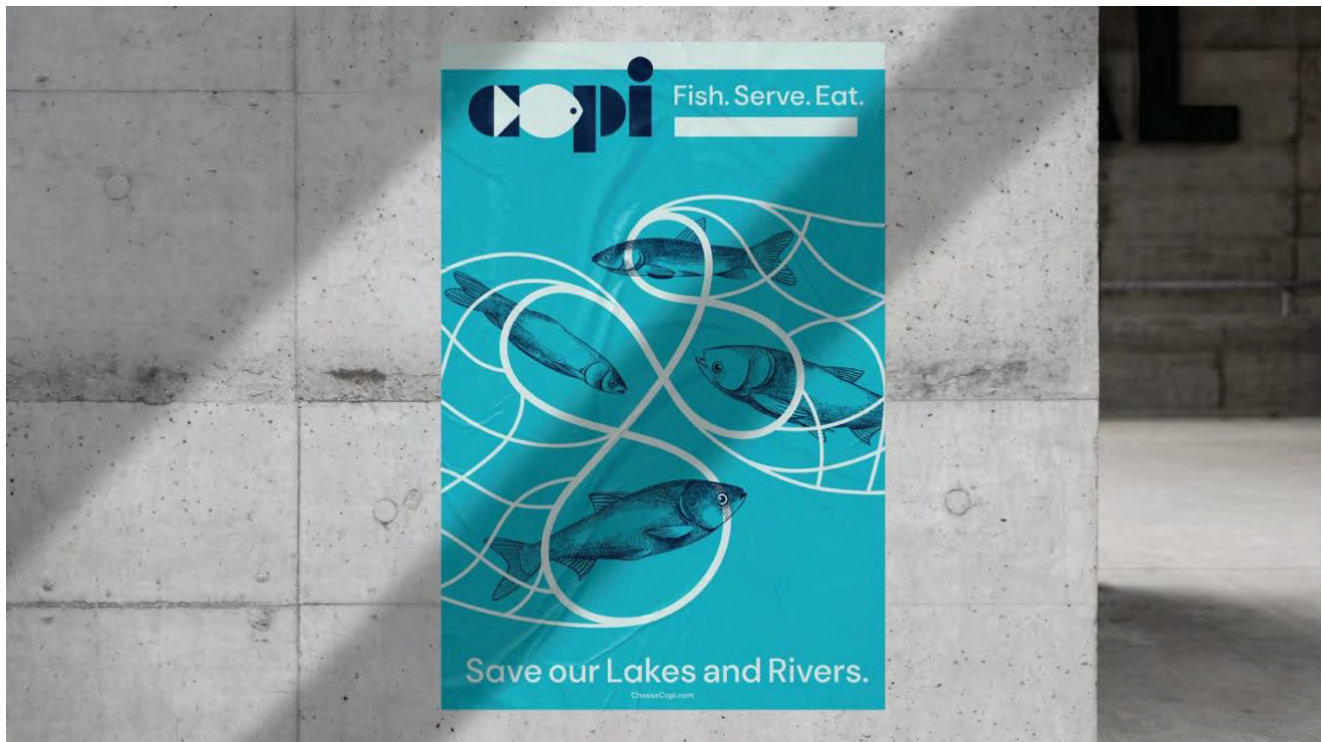
Copi is a freshwater, top-feeding, wild-caught fish that is mild with a clean, light taste.

The new name and brand are designed to address public misconceptions about this delicious top-feeding fish, which is overrunning Midwest waterways.

Copi ([choosecopi.com](http://choosecopi.com)) are mild, clean-tasting fish with heart-healthy omega-3s and very low levels of mercury. Increased consumption will help to stop them from decimating other fish populations in the Great Lakes and restore an ecological balance to waterways down stream.

“Enjoying Copi in a restaurant or at home is one of the easiest things people can do to help protect our waterways and Lake Michigan,” said **John Goss, former White House invasive carp adviser**. “As home to the largest continuous link between Lake Michigan and the Copi-filled Mississippi River system, Illinois has a unique responsibility in the battle to keep invasive carp out of the Great Lakes. I’m proud of Illinois, its partners and other states for rising to this challenge.”

The new name is a play on “copious” – as that’s exactly what these fish are. By one estimate, 20 million to 50 million pounds of Copi could be harvested from the Illinois River alone each year, with hundreds of millions more in waterways from the Midwest to the Gulf Coast.



Save our Lakes and Rivers poster

Changing a fish's name has been a tried-and-true strategy for other fish. Orange roughy was originally known as slimehead; Chilean sea bass was known as Patagonian toothfish (it's not even a bass); and peekytoe crab was once known as mud crab. This strategy has been used for more than fish: exporters introduced Chinese gooseberries as "kiwi," for instance.

"Copi is a great name: Short, crisp and easy to say. What diner won't be intrigued when they read Copi tacos or Copi burgers on a menu?" said **Illinois Department of Natural Resources Director Colleen Callahan**. "It's a tasty fish that's easy to work with in the kitchen and it plates beautifully. Every time we've offered samples during the Illinois State Fair, people have walked away floored by how delicious it is."

As part of today's launch, 21 chefs and retailers have committed to putting Copi on their menus or in their stores, and 14 processors, manufacturers and distributors are making Copi products available.

"Copi is more savory than tilapia, cleaner tasting than catfish, and firmer than cod," said "Chopped" **champion and chef Brian Jupiter**, who revealed the new name and will serve Copi at his Ina Mae Tavern in Chicago. "It's the perfect canvas for creativity – pan fried, steamed, broiled, baked, roasted or grilled. Copi can be ground for burgers, fish cakes, dumplings and tacos."

A list of recommended recipes using Copi can be viewed at [ChooseCopi.com](http://ChooseCopi.com).



Copi Po' Boy prepared by chef Brian Jupiter

Consumers can purchase Copi at the following locations:

- Ina Mae Tavern in Chicago: Copi po'boy.
- Dirk's Fish & Gourmet Shop in Chicago: Copi Cuban sliders and Copi bolognese.
- Gaijin in Chicago: Smoked Copi dish.
- Herb in Chicago: Copi appetizer.
- Calumet Fisheries in Chicago: Smoked Copi for carryout.
- Kelleher's Irish Pub in Peoria, Ill.: Copi slider.
- Carter's Fish Market in Springfield, Ill.: Deep-fried Copi.
- Cash Saver in Camden, Tenn.: Copi strips.
- Tabard Inn in Washington, D.C.: Copi Dim Sum.
- Cristaudo's in Carbondale, Ill.
- Sushi Grove in Buffalo Grove, Ill.: Copi sushi.
- A. Fusion in Matteson, Ill.: Variety of Copi dishes.
- Lakeway IGA in Paris, Tenn.: Copi strips.
- Schafer Fisheries Market in Fulton, Ill.: Variety of Copi items.
- Watson Lake Inn in Prescott, Ariz.: Custom prepared Copi dishes.
- Kubo Sushi and Sake Lounge in Elgin, Ill.: Copi sushi.
- The Meat Shoppe in Union City, Tenn.: Copi strips.
- The Norwegian in Rockford, Ill.
- Max's Deli in Highland Park, Ill.: Smoked Copi.
- Trolinger's in Paris, Tenn.
- Mole Village Restaurant in Chicago: Copi tacos.

Chefs and grocers can purchase Copi from the following processors, manufacturers and distributors:

- Kencor Ethnic Foods in Canton, Ill. (processor, manufacturer of Copi bouillon)
- River Sun Group in Chicago (processor, manufacturer of Copi cakes)
- Schafer Fisheries in Thomson, Ill. (processor)
- Third Generation SFD in Bronx, N.Y. (distributor, Fulton Fish Market)
- Seafood Merchants in Vernon Hills, Ill. (distributor for Illinois, Wisconsin)
- Sorce Freshwater/Midwest Fish Co-Op in East Peoria, Ill. (processor)

- Supreme Lobster in Villa Park, Ill. (distributor for Illinois, Indiana, Nevada, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin; possible air shipment nationally)
- Susie Q Fish Company in Two Rivers, Wis. (processor and retail)
- Two Rivers Fisheries in Wyckliffe, Ky. (processor)
- Chippin in Silver Springs, Md. (distributor)
- North American Caviar in Paris, Tenn. (processor)
- Fortune Fish & Gourmet in Bensenville, Ill. (distributor for, Illinois, Wisconsin, Missouri, Iowa, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Arkansas, Nebraska, Louisiana and Texas)
- Gordon Food Service in Grand Rapids, Mich. (distributor, nationwide)
- Freshwater Fish Products in Bradford, Ark. (processor)

Illinois officials will apply to formally change the name with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration by the end of the year.

“Among the requirements to win federal approval for a name change is widespread use of the name, which is another reason why today’s event is so important,” said **Kevin Irons, the assistant fisheries chief for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources**, who specializes in invasive species. “So there is one thing that everyone can do to help save the Great Lakes: Call the fish Copi.”

When sold in grocery stores, the packaging will describe the fish as carp and Copi until federal regulators approve the name change. The state also has applied to register the trademark so that industry groups will be able to develop standards and ensure quality control.

Copi were originally imported from Southeast Asia to the United States to help keep clean fish farm retention ponds in Southern states. But flooding and accidental releases in the 1970s allowed them to escape, multiply and migrate up the Mississippi River system.

Ever since, a collaboration of local, state, and federal government entities have worked to prevent the invasive species from entering Lake Michigan, which would threaten a \$7 billion-a-year commercial fishing industry and a \$16 billion-a-year tourism industry in the Great Lakes.

A recording of today’s announcement will be posted at [ChooseCopi.com](http://ChooseCopi.com) later today.

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