

REARING OF GIANT FRESHWATER PRAWN (*MACROBRACHIUM ROSENBERGII*) LARVAE UP TO POST LARVAE USING DIFFERENT FEEDS

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The present study was undertaken to examine the rearing of Giant Freshwater Prawn (*Macrobrachium rosenbergii*) larvae up to post larvae using different feeds. *Artemia*, egg custard and mussel custard, spray dried algal cells, shrimp feed and a formulated diet (prepared at the site using powdered milk, corn flour, eggs, shrimp, cod liver oil and vitamin mix as ingredients) were used as different feeds for larval rearing.

The mortality of larvae, the survival of larvae, the time taken to pass from one larval stage to another, the time taken by larvae to complete metamorphosis and growth achieved by the larvae fed with six meals of *Artemia* nauplii day⁻¹ and larvae fed with three meals of *Artemia* nauplii and three meals of prepared feed day⁻¹ was significantly higher than that of the larvae in other feeding regimes (*Artemia* nauplii and spray dried algal cells, *Artemia* nauplii and shrimp diet).

It may be possible to reduce the number of meals that should be supplied with *Artemia* nauplii per day further without having a significant reduction in survival and growth of larvae by improving the physical and nutritional quality of the prepared feed tested during the present study. Increased and consistent production of post larvae that would be achieved at low cost could then be contributed for the expansion of farming of Giant Freshwater Prawn in Sri Lanka.