



AFSCUS

AMERICAN
FISHERIES
SOCIETY
COMPUTER
USER
SECTION

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Reviewed By: Summary of Two Reviewers

Date: 12 June 2007

Program Title: S-FAT V2.0, Add-in for FAST V3.0 Upgrade

Version: V2.0, Add-in for FAST V3.0 upgrade

Program Date: 2006 (bug-fix release in April 2007)

Program Description:

S-FAT Add-in for FAST and also for MS Excel

The program allows the user to apply age-length key to un-aged fish, calculates the number of fish in each age and length group, calculates mean length at age, and back-calculate length at age.

Developers:

Company: Jeff Slipke
Contact/Author(s): Jeff Slipke
e-mail: jslipke@sepond.com
Web Site for FAST Program:
<http://www.fishdata.org/software/fast2.htm>

Program Strengths:

The age-length key is a useful addition to FAST to properly expand your sub-sampled data to the entire sample. Also, the program can calculate number-at-age (see comment below).

It provides a standard analysis for something we all do (i.e., basic calculations around fish ages). This standard package helps reduce errors caused by folks creating their own macros or making errors in using Excel tools.

The back-calculation routine is of particular value, as this is an area where technical staff persons occasionally make simple programming errors.

Program Weaknesses:

Although there was an initial error in the back-calculated portion of the excel add-in, the software was fixed to alleviate the problem.

There did not appear to be an option to calculate number-at-age for all the fish in the sample. There are separate options for "known-age" and for "assigned age." This would be very useful, as one of the main uses of an age-length key is to calculate number-at-age based on the entire sample so you can get age-structure data and calculate mortality.

It would also be useful if there was an option to calculate mean-length at age from the age-length key, since most fisheries biologist sub-sample data for ages.

Program Technical Support:

The author quickly answered the reviewer's e-mail when an earlier version had a major bug (and he solved the bug).

Computer OS Compatibility:

No problems on MS Window 2000 v 5.00.2195, and Excel 2000 (9.0.8950 SP-3) or Windows XP with Excel 2003.

At the present time, FAST (and thus the S-FAT add-in) is NOT compatible with MS Vista operating system.

Program Requirements:

Needs FAST (but S-Fat came with FAST V3 upgrade)

Hardware Compatibility:

IBM Compatible Macintosh Apple Other ____

Hardware Requirements:

(RAM, HDD, CD-ROM, etc): Program is supplied on CD-ROM

Configuration Used by Reviewer:

as above

Documentation:

check with Printed (pgs) pdf On-Line

Subject Area:

check with <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Population Dynamics	<input type="checkbox"/> Modeling
	<input type="checkbox"/> Culture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age and Growth	<input type="checkbox"/> Education
	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematics	<input type="checkbox"/> Population Estimation	<input type="checkbox"/> Administration
	<input type="checkbox"/> Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/> Economics	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		

Availability:

Public Domain Proprietary/Commercial

Accuracy of Calculations:

Good Bad Untested Not Applicable

Review Scores:

CATEGORY	SCORE	COMMENTS
Ease of Installation	9	All automatic loading, no issues
Operating System Environment	10	Works on Win 2000 and XP; Integrated seamlessly into Excel; FAST is presently not compatible with Windows Vista.
User Interface	8	Users needs an basic understanding of terms
Help Facility	7	There is a "help" section with the MS Excel, but not FAST
Documentation	9	The only documentation is on the HELP function, but I needed nothing more; Any of the "help" for FAST is well documented in PDF
Learning Curve	8	Less than five minutes to figure out and run; need a basic understanding of the terms
Ease of Use	8	It was easy to use.
Calculation Accuracy	10	When results were compared to previous data analysis, no differences were noted
Education Value	5	Could be used as a teaching tool, but designed for something else
Productivity Potential	10	Why write your own if you have this?
Examples	10	Examples on the HELP function were exactly what I needed
Usefulness to Fisheries Scientists	8	The add-in doesn't advance the science, but cleans up something we all do; the FAST program is very useful overall.
OVERALL RATING	9	

* Use 1 to 10 rating scales: 1 = bad; 5 = average or acceptable; 10 = great.

Incorporate into AFSCUS Library: Yes No

General Comments: Cool stuff. One of the reviewers is suggesting it as a standard analysis procedure for his agency.

Selling Price (if applicable): \$50, including upgrade to FAST 3.0; users who have not purchased a previous version of FAST will need to purchase it for an additional \$75.