
ATLANTA

SUPPLY & CONSUMPTION

The Consulate General in Atlanta covers the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Many of these states also enjoy an active tourism industry which augments considerably a population base of 43 million people. Retail food sales are expected to reach US\$78 billion for 1992. Estimates for foodservice sales vary according to source, however it is probable that restaurant sales will approach US\$83 billion while total food sales should reach an additional US\$78 for 1992, each representing increases over 1991. It is difficult to estimate the imports of Canadian lobster into the territory. All lobster is sold as "Maine lobster", and the public is encouraged to think in those terms. Restaurants sell lobster (generally in the form of tails, but do not differentiate between species and the other types (cock and spiny etc.) that come from the same area.

UNITED STATES

As of December 1992, live lobster is sold at approximately US\$6.95/lb to US\$7.95/lb at retail and on occasion a supermarket chain will have a loss-leader sale at about US\$3.99/lb. A distributor will sell it to the supermarket at a 30% (approximate) mark-up. The biggest competitor to Canadian frozen lobster is the Caribbean lobster tail which most distributors buy from brokers at about US\$11.95/lb, in a falling market. If the distributor can buy direct from the supplier in the Caribbean the price will be in the neighbourhood of US\$9.00/lb. Australian and New Zealand lobster tails are at the US\$16.00/lb level and are making inroads into the foodservice market. Demand for frozen tails from Canadian sources is well developed, when available, with pricing varying according to market forces. Media attention on the safety of seafood may adversely affect the sale of lobster, if this issue continues on the front burner. The U.S. FDA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) have received increased funding with respect to inspection procedures for seafood imports as well as domestic production. Such suggestions will have a significant impact on the industry.



DISTRIBUTION

Frozen appears to be the classic point of origin for "Maine lobster". However, suppliers are increasing and continuing to expand to some markets. The threat of a shortage is not considerably on an already expensive commodity. Distribution is done by locally hold lobsters and deliver them to their customers. Distributors also sell a daily or weekly basis. Retail customers have a seafood section which they look at the next three to five days sales. The price varies according to expected traffic. Live lobsters in a retail environment are never value-added. Lobster products are sold through various channels or are sold through a retail chain. Some is proprietary packaged under private label.

PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Consulate General in Atlanta has scheduled two incoming missions to Atlantic Canada as well as other missions to the food/seafood industry in Toronto and Montreal, all in fiscal year 1993-94. The most important foodservice events take place in the Post territory: 1) Southeast Hospitality and Foodservice Expo, October 1993 in Atlanta, Georgia; 2) Food and Foodservice Equipment Show of the Caribbean, April 1993 in San Juan, Puerto Rico; and 3) Solo Food Show (Canadian products only), November 1993, in Miami, Florida. The post is fully disposed to cooperating with CALPA or with other organizations.