

Numerous international and specialized trade fairs take place in France each year offering the exporter an obvious marketplace for his goods. Over 40 take place in Paris alone on an annual or biennial basis while other important exhibitions are held at Cannes, Lyon and Nice. For fisheries products the Salon International de l'Alimentation held every second year in Paris is the most important trade show.

France has a great many retail food outlets. However, the trend in recent years has been toward larger units, particularly supermarkets and hypermarkets, the growth of which has been very rapid in the past decade. Large North American style shopping centres have also grown in importance. the growth of these large retail outlets has met with considerable opposition from the smaller traditional shopkeepers. In order to withstand the competition, many small shops have grouped together into voluntary buying associations. Direct sales to large retail food chains and buying associations are becoming increasingly more common. When considering selling to the French hypermarkets, an exporter should remember that these stores deal in large volume sales of goods that are generally suitable for selling at competitive discount price ranges.