

MARKET ACCESS

GENERAL DOCUMENTS

France is a member of GATT and also of the OECD. The conventional documents that any importer needs are: the bill of lading or air waybill (AWB), commercial invoices, customs documents for departure from Canada and, where applicable, a certificate of origin. All documents and labels must be in French or be accompanied by a French translation. However, the bill of lading and insurance certificate may be in English only.

SANITARY CERTIFICATES

Fish products must be accompanied by a sanitary certificate made out by an inspector from Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Models of such sanitary certificates have been provided by the EU authorities. On these certificates, the products must be designated by their Latin and official French name, and their origin must be indicated. Packaging must mention Canada and bear the EEC approval number (cf 6.8)

FROZEN PRODUCTS

The products (individual packages and cartons) must show the date of freezing and the batch number (which in many instances is the date of freezing). If the importer wishes, his name may appear on the cartons as well.

PRODUCTS FOR SALE TO CONSUMERS

Frozen products must comply with the above rules. Such products are subject to very exact composition and labelling requirements which are different from those in effect in Canada. In particular, many ingredients are considered additives, and their inclusion in the product may be prohibited. Some weights or volumes are required, while others are forbidden. The label must show the official name of the product, the importer's name or code, the words "Produit du Canada" [product of Canada], the net weight, and the composition of the product. The words "A consommer de préférence avant..." ("best before" date) must also be shown; in many instances this date is 12, 18 or 24 months after the date of freezing, in the case of frozen products. Instructions for preparation or serving suggestions are frequently requested. The metric system is compulsory, as is the use of the French language. Labels may, however, carry other languages as well, if the product is to be offered for sale in other countries. Every labelling case has its own requirements; we recommend that you consult our services at the Embassy.

TERMINOLOGY

A list of official French names and the corresponding Latin names is available for marine and diadromous fishes. A similar list is being prepared for molluscs, in co-ordination with the EU. Other lists are to follow, for crustaceans and freshwater species. In the meantime, prospective exporters should consult Appendix 4 and the OECD dictionary (Multilingual Dictionary of Fish and Fish Products, 1990 edition), as well as obtain the relevant information from the importer.

SCALLOPS

A special situation exists with respect to scallops, and has varied greatly recently. Please consult the Embassy directly for the latest developments. Maximum permissible water content values (moisture to protein ratio below 5) are the subject of special regulations.