

INCREASES have been, and will continue to be, limited due to a slow market.

My prepared comments today will consist of market analysis and a few projections for the rest of 1989. Then, I shall talk about prices by major species. I shall talk about problem areas as well as opportunities, of course.

I shall also touch a bit on some implications of our Free Trade Agreement with the United States, now that it is finally in place. However, I don't intend to duplicate what has already been said about the agreement earlier during this conference.

But, first, let us look at the big picture. Let us look at the business environment or the general trends in the market. To understand 1989 we should look back to last year. It was a year when our seafood business was, generally, a disappointment, at least in the United States. You all know it was a disappointing year because your prices were down. And prices were down because supplies were in excess -- not because production was up but rather because overall demand started to slow down. The per-capita consumption of seafood in the USA in 1988 has not as yet been finalized, but my feeling is that it might have been lower than the 1987 level of 15.4 pounds. Such a decline would have been the first one since 1982.

In contrast, we are told that poultry consumption in the United States shot up to a record 77.7 pounds per capita in