

1. FRANCE: AN OVERVIEW OF THE MARKET

France possesses an agricultural and food products industry that is strong and diversified (with total sales of 563 billion francs in 1988) and traditionally export-oriented (exports amounted to 103 billion francs in 1988, while imports totalled 78 billion francs). The fish products industry displays much the same profile, apart from the fact that it is characterized by a trade deficit arising largely from imports of relatively expensive products.

In 1988 France imported C\$ 2 738 million worth of fish products, including \$ 99.4 million from Canada. Canada ranks seventh among France's suppliers of such products, behind the United Kingdom, Norway, Denmark, Senegal, the Netherlands and the United States.

France is the largest European market for salmon and smoked salmon and for live and frozen lobster. There are many other products that could be successfully marketed in France.

GNP:	6508.6 billion French francs (1988), i.e. approximately C\$ 1 131 billion.
GNP per capita:	101 276 French francs (1988), i.e. approximately C\$ 20 235
Economy:	Free market economy Many government-funded enterprises, except in the agricultural and food sector
Currency:	French franc (FFr or FF); C\$ 1 is worth approximately 5 francs
Weights and measures:	Metric system compulsory; it is the only system used by the government and in domestic trade
Language:	French English is used very little
Electricity:	220 volts, 50 Herz
Television standards:	SECAM (incompatible with the North American NTSC system)
Taxes:	VAT (value added tax) of 5.5% on all food products, charged at the retail sale level.