

ARGENTINA

SUPPLY & CONSUMPTION

There is no domestic supply of lobster in Argentina, therefore all local demand is supplied through imports. Argentines are traditionally marginal consumers of fishery products and lobster consumption is extremely low. The main users of lobster products are up-scale restaurants and specialized high quality fishery retail outlets. Lobster is imported both live and frozen, mainly from Chile, Ecuador, Brazil and the United States, however, quantities are minimal and imports are not on a regular basis. It is estimated that less than one tonne of lobster is imported per month, with 900 pounds of this consumed in Buenos Aires and surrounding suburbs. Consumption has been relatively stable over the years except for the high inflation periods (1989/90) when imports were almost stopped. Retail prices are very high and range from a low of US\$35.00 per kilo to US\$60.00 per kilo, with prices even higher in restaurants.

DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS

Both frozen and live lobsters are imported by 2-3 specialized importers of fishery products, who distribute the product directly to retail outlets and consumers. The importers decide the origin of the product based on price rather than quality. There is no general awareness of quality standards for lobster, and people who consume lobster consider it a status symbol rather than a specialty food item.

PHYTOSANITARY REGULATIONS

Lobster can be imported under a normal health certificate which is standard for fishery products entering Argentina.

TARIFFS/NTB'S

Because there is no local production, lobster is imported with a tariff structure of 50% C.I.F. Buenos Aires, plus a 180% V.A.T.

PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Low consumption and low export potential to Argentina does not allow for any significant promotional activities.

IMPORTERS/USERS

Frozen Fish S.A.
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H. Yrigoyen 1991
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