

standards below which no product could be sold and expressed the desire to continue the dialogue with the Japanese before any decision could be reached on options.

The Japanese chairman summarized quality enhancement in terms of two elements (1) the handling and sorting of herring after catching and in the plant and (2) grading of finished product. Each requires a different approach. Buyers need to make decisions on what to buy but this is easier said than done. If the Japanese market is bearish and inventory large, buyers will be more selective. If the market is bullish buyers will purchase lower quality product. The chairman noted, however, the need to move in the direction of establishing objective grade criteria. He urged both Canadian producers and Japanese buyers to discuss criteria among themselves; once criteria were established both parties should comply. The Canadian side agreed that further dialogue on the question of grade standards within a broader cross section of the Canadian industry was needed.

The Japanese side referred to earlier written proposals by JMPIA for minimum quality standards for Atlantic herring roe. These are as follows: (1) fish size should be sorted in two categories - over 200 grams, under 200 grams, 2) egg size should be 10 grams or more per piece, 3) fish having fully matured eggs should be 7% or more of the total catch, 4) eggs should be taken out and processed within one day of landing. Each of the four points was then examined in detail.

The Japanese side noted that with respect to roe size the larger sizes were preferred since they were more resistant to breakage. There was concern expressed by the increase in smaller size fish in SW Nova Scotia and it was implied that the best way to ensure larger roe size was through larger size fish. The Canadian side undertook to examine with the Canadian industry the cost implications of pre-sorting the fish. The representative of Nicherei noted a trend between 1984 and 1987 towards smaller fish size but in 1988 there was an increase in size again.

The Canadian side expressed the opinion that different fishing methods between northern waters where gillnets are used and southern waters where purse seines are used make it virtually impossible to uniformly regulate fish size. However, the Canadian side agreed to review the question of fish size regulations and asked JMPIA to do the same.