

The only thing to watch about the flounder and sole market is, once again, the expanding production of flatfish off Alaska and the US Pacific Coast. An increase of as much as 30 million pounds this year is not altogether inconceivable.

While still talking about frozen groundfish, I might add in passing that other species like haddock, Atlantic pollock and hake will also be short even for our own use here in Canada. For these species, however, prices may simply stabilize as they already have been at high enough levels.

Fresh groundfish fillets still make for an interesting segment of US seafood market. The prices are not too high at the moment, but they are expected to improve later in the year. This is because the New England landings will undoubtedly continue to drop both in the short and long term. If our products are handled and marketed efficiently, there seems to be more room for good margins, relatively speaking, for us if we are to establish ourselves as alternative reliable, and might I add, direct, suppliers to this market.

While we are dealing with fresh fish, you all might recall that there was some danger in the past for the New England to restrict imports of "small" groundfish fillets from Canada. Well, the danger is not eminent for now. Maybe in the future. However, if we aim at achieving prices that approach the levels the American cutters in New England actually get, we would really be doing ourselves a big favor in more ways than one.