

Most buyers prefer to deal with a local agent or distributor who takes responsibility for delivery and product quality, rather than taking the risks involved when purchasing directly from the foreign supplier.

PHYTOSANITARY REGULATIONS

All imported fisheries products must comply with sanitary requirements established by the Secretariat of Health, published in the Official Gazette on January 18, 1988. The law prohibits the marketing of fisheries products whose natural appearance, composition or quality have been adulterated in any way; they are considered to be contaminated when they exceed the limits allowed by the Secretariat for pathogenic agents, foreign substances, antibiotic residues, hormones and toxic substances such as heavy metals, biotoxins, petroleum and hydrocarbon derivatives, insecticides, bacteriostatis and radioactive substances.

The Secretariat of Health requires that importers apply for, and obtain, an "Autorización Sanitaria Previa de Importación" for all food and fish products. In order to obtain such authorizations, importers must present laboratory analysis results taken in the country of origin, which certify that the product is safe for human consumption. In the case of lobsters, Fisheries and Oceans Canada is supportive of Canadian exporters who wish to ship product into the Mexican market. On the request of Canadian lobster exporters, FANDO's regional inspection Services Branch will issue certificates to enable Mexican customers to process their import applications in accordance with the rulings of the Secretariat of Health. Interested parties should contact the regional offices of Fisheries and Oceans, or Director General, Inspection and Enforcement, Fisheries and Oceans, 200 Kent Street, Ottawa, Ontario.

TARIFFS/NTB'S

As of November 13, 1992 crayfish and lobster imports do not require a permit from the Secretariat of Commerce and Industrial Development (SECOFI). Under the Harmonized System, crustaceans are described according to the following: "Crustaceans, including those that are shelled, live, fresh, chilled, frozen, dried, salted or in brine; unshelled crustaceans, boiled in water or steamed, chilled, frozen, dry, salted or in brine; meal, flour or "pellets" of crustaceans, fit for human consumption". Ad Valorem tariffs for lobster products entering Mexico currently are: 0306.11.01 (20%); 0306.12.01 (20%); 0306.21.01 (20%); 0306.22.01 (20%); and 1605.30.01 (20%).

POST COMMENTS

In recent months there has been growing interest among potential seafood importers and distributors for information on Canada's lobster industry. The Embassy in Mexico City does not believe there is merit in organizing a specific lobster trade mission to Mexico. The Embassy will participate in PESCA-Industria '93 in Ensenada, and the show can be used to further promote the Canadian lobster industry.

The recent easing of import controls for fisheries products could result in increasing future sales of Canadian lobster and crayfish into the Mexican market. It should be recognized, however, that because Mexico is one of the world's major lobster producers, significant increases to the present import levels would seem unlikely. Canadian exporters may have to be content with supplying a niche market at best. The Mexican market is highly competitive, demands good quality product, guaranteed supply and attractive prices. Canadian companies that can comply with these conditions will be able to establish a foothold in the marketplace.