

SINGAPORE

The local market for marine products is fairly large with Singapore importing over \$1 billion Cdn worth of fish products in 1989. The per capita consumption of seafood is about 30 kg, the second highest in Asia after Japan which consumes 36.5 kg per capita. Increasing consumption is due to consumer awareness of fish as a healthy source of protein, and a renewed interest in seafood resulting from rising standards of living.

Although consumption of seafood in general has taken on a healthy trend, statistics indicated that Canada's share of the Singapore import market is small. Canada's range of products are classified as temperate species, whose consumption is minimal in this region. The popular species of fish consumed in Singapore include the white pomfret, spanish mackerel, golden snapper, hard tail, coral fish, sea bream, dorab and the other cultered species such as sea bass and grouper. Other seafood products which would remain in demand (usually by institutional customers) are the exotic, high value seafood varieties like smelt, tuna, salmon, lobster, dogfish, geoduck, abalone and dried squid.

Of the more than 50 types of marine products imported into Singapore, 7 items account for 53 percent of the total imports. Those 7 items are prawns and shrimp, fresh, chilled or frozen (22 percent), tuna, frozen (19 percent), other marine fish frozen (11 percent), marine fish, fresh or chilled (7 percent), abalone, canned (6 percent), sharkfin, salted or dried (6 percent), and cuttlefish and squid, salted (4 percent). Aside from the items enumerated above, other marine products which have experienced high growth in Singapore are cod, excluding fillet, dried (80 percent), fish fillet, fresh, chilled or frozen (40 percent), prawns and shrimp salted, dried or boiled (37 percent), cuttlefish and squid, salted, dried or boiled (30 percent) and tuna, canned (25 percent). The bulk (74 percent) of imported marine products are re-exported to other regional markets.

Historically, Singaporeans have always purchased fresh fish from wet markets. This trend is gradually changing due to the proliferation of working mothers who do not have the time to shop at wet markets and are more inclined to purchase frozen or chilled items at the supermarket. Furthermore, with the current popularity of the microwave, "microwaveable" food products offer a potential market for suppliers. In the fish products category, the demand for fish fillets, peeled shrimps and other forms of easy-to-prepare types of food will increase. The demand for fish products in the region is also growing as demonstrated by the high re-export figure of 74 percent for this product category. In general, Singaporeans are extremely discerning where food products are concerned and will continue to demand food products with consistent high quality.