

Warehousing

Cold storage capacity has been problematic from time to time in the past, although today the port of Abidjan is described as well equipped and efficient. Imported fish is held in either public (Distripac) or private warehousing. Socef is the largest cold storage warehouse firm in CI; its subsidiary firm Cofral, owns the largest number of cold storage distribution depots. Note, however, that household refrigeration is unavailable to most Ivorians.

Distribution

The Ministry of Commerce has attempted to implement price controls; competition remains the most effective control, however. Local women wielding significant economic power act as the principal fish retailers in Côte d'Ivoire.

LICENSING: There are ten licensed import firms and distributors, who are allocated adjustable import quotas. Licenses are unnecessary for most imports from EEC.

INSPECTIONS: The importer must obtain a health inspection certificate. Associated fees are 3 CFA francs per kg of product, (50 CFA francs = 1 French franc), plus 1000 CFA francs per shipment. A copy of current health inspection regulations for Ivorian fish imports is available from External Affairs Fisheries Division upon request.

PACKAGING AND LABELLING: The Post notes that Ivorian consumers remain faithful to European packaging as traditionally received both in terms of design, and weight (20 to 30 kg). All-important Côte d'Ivoire "mammies" expect European-style packaging which facilitates accurate hand estimates of the weight of fish bought. Other packaging results in consumer resistance. European suppliers traditionally "overpack" cartons. Canadian packaged product corresponding exactly to marked weight may be at a competitive disadvantage.

Minimal size variation of fish is desired as a fixed price per fish often holds at retail.

Regulations require all goods to be labelled in English or French with country of origin, as well as date of production. Country of origin should be clearly marked on all cartons, cases, etc.

Shipping packages should be as sturdy as economically practical (reinforced, steel strapping, etc.) to bear rough handling, moisture, and other hazards.

DOCUMENTATION: All import documentation must be in French or come with French translation. Requirements include: three copies commercial invoice on shipper's letterhead; two copies certificate of origin; bill of lading or nine copies of IATA air waybill; three copies of shipper's export declaration. The exporter must also furnish the importer with a pro forma invoice in French (or containing a translation) to be attached to the