

CONSUMPTION

The Taiwanese are faithful to traditional Chinese cooking methods and require species in forms conducive to this style of preparation. Seafood is a daily part of Taiwanese diets.

A majority of consumers prefer seafood dishes to be prepared in traditional Chinese methods by steaming or quick fry. The Taiwanese are interested in low fat and high protein seafood sources.

Another challenge facing Canadian exporters is to educate Taiwanese importers and consumers generally ignorant of the Atlantic lobster, and to counter their belief that Atlantic lobster yields less meat than the spiny lobster because of the weight in the front claws. Fast food outlets are emerging in Taiwan catering to the younger generation. As a result, future consumption habits may develop in Taiwan toward a greater acceptance of more processed fishery products.

Canadian seafood exporters should not overlook the Taiwan market for value-added seafood products. Total per capita expenditure in 1994 was US\$139. In addition, import tariffs on almost all consumer products are falling, while per capita consumption is increasing. In 1994, consumer goods imports were US\$10 billion.

The people of Taiwan are usually receptive to imported consumer goods, particularly items with internationally-renowned brand names. This affinity is not limited to luxury products. At least four Taiwan-Japanese joint-ventured department stores and Hong Kong-based Watson's chemist shops and Wellcome supermarkets are all well established on the island, as well as outlets of numerous foreign fast-food chains. The ongoing liberalization of Taiwan's robust economy and the propensity of the younger segment of the population to spend should make the island an even more lucrative market for imported consumer goods in the future.