

FISHERIES MARKET REPORT - JAPAN

General Outlook

Japanese market

- The total volume of Japanese imports of fish and fishery products in 1990 was the highest ever at 2,544 thousand tons. This was an increase of 11.2% from 1989 and an increase of 5.3% over 1988, which had been the highest level of imports ever.
- The value of imports was also the highest ever, at ¥1,608 billion, an increase from 1989 of 10.9%.
- Increases in imports of traditional major import species such as shrimp, tuna and salmon contributed to the increase in total imports in 1990, although these species were not a factor in Canada's increase.
- A decrease in the Japanese domestic inventory during the first half of 1990, resulting from importers' initiatives to decrease imports as much as possible in 1989, and the strengthening of the Japanese yen since the beginning of the Gulf Crisis, are the major reasons for the increase in imports during 1990.
- The labour shortage continues to seriously affect Japanese fisheries processors. As a result, many processors do not wish to process low value-added species, as the profit margins are insufficient.
- High interest rates continue to leave some importers cautious about carrying large inventories of product. Exporters may see purchases being spread out over a longer period of time.

Canadian exports to Japan

- 1990 was a good year for Canadian exports of fisheries products to Japan. Both the volume and value of exports were our second highest ever, exceeded only by the figures for 1988.
- Volume increased by 1.9% over 1989, but the value of our exports increased by 9.7%, reflecting the change in the mixture of our exports to higher value products, such as shellfish and roes.
- 1991 should be another good year for Canadian exports of fisheries products as demand remains strong for most of our products. The two problem areas which we can already identify are capelin and salted herring roes, which are discussed in