

INTRODUCTION

Lobster is one of the first commercial fisheries to be developed in Canada. In fact lobster canning along with salmon canning are two of Canada's oldest processing industries.

The first lobster cannery was constructed in New Brunswick in 1887 and by 1900 there were 767 canneries. Most of the production was shipped to the UK. The UK is still our largest market for canned salmon but it has ceased to be a major market for lobster. We endeavour to change that.

Three kinds of lobster are marketed for food - clawed lobster, squat lobster and the spiny or non-clawed lobster. The lobsters found in US and Canadian waters is the American lobster - Homarus Americanus. While it has no immediate relatives in Canada it is related to the European lobster - Homarus Grammarus and the Norway lobster or scampi.

Canada is the world's leading supplier of lobster species and accounts for 25 per cent of the world catch which amounted to 144,000 tonnes in 1987. The other major suppliers are the United States, Australia and Cuba. The Homarus species has shown the largest increase in landings of any lobster species in recent years.

The Provinces of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick account for about 80 per cent of lobster landings with the remainder from Quebec and Newfoundland.

In 1988 landings totalled 38,5000 tonnes with a landed value of some \$250 million. The lobster fishery produces a landed value second only to that of cod in Atlantic Canada and has become a major source of income for many small boat fishermen.

Of the 90% of total landings exported in 1988, 71% were destined to the USA. 22% to Europe and 7% to Japan.

DISTRIBUTION

The American lobster is found solely in the waters of the Atlantic coast of North America from Labrador to North Carolina and is fished commercially from Newfoundland to Virginia. The areas of greatest yield are