

Ireland enjoys self-sufficiency in many species, and for 1992, Irish lobster exports totalled 304.9 tonnes, valued at £2.7 million. Of this total, live lobster accounted for 244.2 MT valued at £2.2 million {81.5 percent by value}; and other lobster products accounted for 60.7 MT valued at £535,000. Individual Irish lobster import statistics for 1992 based on product form were as follows: H.S.0306.1210 (3.3 MT, £18,4000); 0306.1290 (8.6 Mt, £41,600); 0306.2100 (3.2 MT £13,700); 0306.2291 (0.4 MT £3,400); 0306.2299 (1.7 MT£8,500); and 1605.3 (1.3 MT £7,100). Total imports for 1992 were 23 MT valued at £104,000. Distribution is largely handled by quay-side buying agents who channel live supplies to the French market; retailers; fish merchants; and restaurants. In addition, Irish agents can negotiate imports from counterparts in Northern Ireland. Restaurant owners buy quay-side, or from the Dublin fish market.

Irish Lobster Exports

{Tonnes}

<i>Product Form</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1991</i>	<i>1992</i>
Lobster, live	500.8	415.0	244.2
Other lobster products	42.5	27.0	60.7
Total Irish lobster exports	543.3	442.0	304.9

Source: Ireland Department of Marine

ITALY

Italy's production of all crustaceans in 1992 was estimated at 31,472 tonnes, representing a decline from 1991, as pollution and over-fishing reduce resources. Per capita consumption of seafood in Italy dropped to 14.6kg per person in 1992, down from 16.1kg in 1991. Demand for crustaceans is concentrated in the major coastal cities, and is strongest during the summer vacation period when requirements are augmented by strong foreign tourist demand. Fish products are traditionally marketed through fishmongers and supermarkets for home cooking. Italian consumers are dining out less frequently, and consuming less lavish meals than previous. Crustaceans, especially the larger-sized species, are consumed almost exclusively by the restaurant and catering sector. Supplier offers are consequently often judged less on price, than on quality concerns. In this context, the lobster market in Italy currently amounts to about 3500-4000 tonnes, split between the so-called "Aragosta" and related species; and the "Astice". The total domestic catch runs to around 400-500 tonnes, 90 percent of which is Aragosta.

Imports in 1992 accounted for over 80 percent of the market, more than half consisting of *Homarus Americanus* imported from the United States and Canada. Sales of the latter have grown at a substantial pace, doubling between 1989 and 1990, while showing a less dramatic, but still significant increase of 25 percent in 1991. During 1992, there was a decline due to the difficult economic situation, and 1993 showed a further drop in imports. A potential market exist in Italy for prepared frozen products, mainly in the catering sector, but this will require patient promotion on the part of international firms.

1992 Italian Lobster Imports

{Tonnes}

<i>H.S.</i>	<i>World</i>	<i>Intra-EU</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Canada</i>
0306.1100	981	218	9	--
0306.1210	67	19	3	45
0306.1290	8	2	--	1
0306.1930	5,103	4,838	--	--
0306.2100	267	52	12	1
0306.2210	2,215	16	1,882	310
0306.2291	10	--	--	--
0306.2299	2	--	--	--
0306.2930	666	262	--	--
1605.3000	25	20	--	5
Totals	9,344	5,427	1,906	362

Source: ISTAT-Compendio Statistico Italiano