

HAKE

[Merluccius merluccius; M. capensis] Spanish: merluza French: merlu  
The Spanish market for frozen hake is being supplied by the Spanish fishing fleet from the South Africa banks in particular, plus stocks of Southwest Atlantic hake (M. hubbsi) and M. australis taken in Argentine waters. Southwest Atlantic hake (M. hubbsi) is fished above latitude 45/47 and is of very low quality. It sells at a low price in Spain and is used mainly for secondary fish products.

M. australis is taken from southern waters off Argentina (Falkland Islands) and Chile. This species is becoming increasingly popular because of its excellent quality - to the point where it is flown in fresh daily from Chile. The price is around US\$4-4.50/kg C&F Madrid. Only large sizes are imported (3/4-5kg per piece) in plastic boxes packed with a small quantity of ice.

Importation of these products is subject to a quota which is spread over the four quarters of the year (non-EEC countries only - imports from EEC countries enter free).

The total quantity that can be requested under a single import permit is 5% of the annual quote.

The annual quota for 1987 was 17 000 tonnes, split into 4.25 tonnes per quarter.

The quota on frozen hake fillets was 6 500 tonnes (1 625 tonnes per quarter).

Fresh or chilled hake was subject to a quota of 965 tonnes (100 tonnes in the first quarter, 300 tonnes in the second quarter, 350 tonnes in the third quarter, and 215 tonnes in the fourth quarter).

To apply for the Fish Products Import Certificate specified under Articles 174 and 176 of the Single European Act, a bond must be posted equivalent to 5% of the value of the import shipment. This certificate is valid for 90 days; if the respective importation is not carried out during this period, the bond is forfeited.

This certificate is not granted automatically, however. Rather, the Ministry must assess each company to determine its solvency, business reputation, etc.