

DOMESTIC FISHERY

Singapore's seafood business has entered a new stage, moving up from its traditional middleman role to a major centre for processing. Total exports of processed seafood soared from about \$118 million in 1984 to \$220 million last year. Over the last five years, the local seafood processing industry has grown from supplying the domestic market to the more important foreign markets such as Japan, United States and Europe. In the area of food manufacturing in general, the thrust is towards export oriented industries.

Fiscal incentives and government grants are available for firms who engage in the development of agro-technology projects and services. Participation of the private sector, including foreign companies, is encouraged. Some possible investment areas pinpointed are:

1. Shrimp/prawn and fish hatchery technology with emphasis on genetic selection for higher yield and more disease resistant varieties;
2. Intensive shrimp/prawn and fish farming technology systems in tanks and raceways under controlled environmental production;
3. Shrimp/prawn and fish artificial feeds with special diets for different growth stages, for enhancing growth and coloration, for prophylaxis and medication and for larval stages in hatcheries.

FLEET

Singapore's fleet fishes primarily offshore in the South China Sea and parts of the Indian Ocean. The fleet also conducts some inshore fishing activities in territorial waters surrounding the tip of the Malay Peninsula. Singapore's offshore fleet consists of approximately 150 boats from 20 to 80 tonnes that are worked by approximately 1000 fishermen. Vessels fish for between 5-7 days per week and immediately chill the fish whole upon landing.

DISTRIBUTION

The Fisheries Division of the Ministry of National Development in Singapore operates the distribution facilities and infrastructure in two ports of landing in Singapore. Jurong is the larger port and handles 85 percent of all fish entering Singapore (both foreign and domestic). The wholesale market for local catches operates every night in Jurong when approximately 100 private companies sell their product from stalls either through auction or by direct sales to retailers. Three to four thousand buyers appear every night for 200-300 tonnes of fish. Pongu is the other major port, however it handles only local vessels and landings. Product must be sold by mid-morning to be fresh due to high temperatures and lack of refrigeration in local markets. Unsold fish must be thrown out or made into fishmeal. The local catch only satisfies 20% of the domestic market for fresh fish but low-priced fish is imported every day from neighbouring Malaysia and Thailand, and helps to satisfy the local Chinese population who prefer fresh fish over frozen.

LANDINGS

Major species of fish and seafood landed by the Singapore fishing fleet in 1992 included marine fishes nei (3,254 metric tons), Natantian decapods nei (1,014 metric tons), brown mussels (893 metric tonnes), skates and rays, nei (500 metric tons), sea catfishes, nei (489 metric tons), and lizardfishes, nei (487 metric tons).