

Opportunities do exist for Canada to export more fish and fish products to Australia but efforts down the years have seen no significant change from the predominance of canned salmon. Reasons for this are many but, the main reasons have been Canada's inability to compete with traditional suppliers of the stable requirement, namely, a white, relatively bland fillet; and perhaps owing to distance and population, Canadian suppliers have neither expressed little interest nor expended significant effort accessing the Australian market. To be more specific, Canadian suppliers should look at Australia as an attractive market for certain filleted fish species which have been traditionally imported to satisfy the requirements of the Australian market. Thus, potential should exist, provided the price is right and presentation acceptable, for Canadian exports of halibut, turbot, plaice, redfish, cod, dogfish, scallops and squid tubes.

Of imported fillets, approximately 85 percent are used by the catering and institutional market, while the balance finds its way to the supermarket and fish retail trade or is used in value-added processing, eg. convenience meals. Market access is basically unrestricted with the exception of fresh salmonids, which have an import ban, and canned tuna, skipjack and bonito, which has a duty of 13 percent of the FOB value. Salmon and trout flesh must be heat smoked under prescribed conditions in plants approved by the Australian quarantine authorities. All fish entering Australia is subject to quarantine inspection for mercury content. For all practical purposes, this inspection is confined to species of the shark family.

As an observation, Australia has established, on the island state of Tasmania, a viable Atlantic salmon industry which is presently suffering from an over-supply or limited-demand situation. The producers are presently selling at between \$12-14 per kg for which the consumer is paying \$18-20 per kg. Imported fish products are brought in by prime importers who sell to distributors and major chain groups. While letter of credit terms are acceptable, long-term suppliers are expected to provide, such terms as sight draft or 30-30 day bank drafts. Quotations, unless otherwise stipulated, should be in Canadian dollars CIF Australian port basis in 20 ft container shipments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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