

REGIONAL CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

Consumption patterns for the United States market are as diverse as any seafood trading nation. A population of over 250 million people divided into 50 states and territories, further segregated into thousands of micro counties and townships. Each marketing region (small or large) exhibits particular consumption patterns for retail, foodservice, wholesale and catalogue sales opportunities. Canadian fish and seafood exporters must be thoroughly prepared for tackling the U.S. market with a marketing package that is appropriate for the desired sales area. Because U.S. consumers are presented with a vast assortment of seafood products from which to choose, Canadian exporters should ensure that proper promotional materials and point-of-purchase information have been designed with regional characteristics as a primary consideration.

Adding to the demographic diversity of the United States consumer seafood market are the multiple ethnic forces at work influencing demand. The growth of America's ethnic population is having a significant impact on seafood marketing both at the retail and foodservice levels. Seafood is bought, sold and used differently depending on the cultural background of the regional market and the degree to which the particular ethnic market is maintaining its cultural origins of the United States. According to *American Demographics* and U.S. census data, non-Hispanic whites will make up the majority of Americans for the next 90 years, but the size of that majority is shrinking. All these demographic changes mount challenges for Canadian seafood marketers, but they provide opportunities for those firms who take the time to identify and target the markets that make up their customer base.

Multiculturalism throughout the U.S. makes target marketing necessary almost on a neighbourhood-by-neighbourhood basis. Because retail and foodservice operations on one side of a major metropolitan area may need totally different positioning strategies from their counterparts on the other side of the city. Micro-marketing of Canadian fish and seafood products is becoming the norm and expectant exporters should ensure target markets match well with price, product and quality. Mass marketing strategies and tactics of the 1970's and 1980's are no longer viable, the 1990's are the decade of micro-marketing. Based on a *Consumer Expenditure Survey* which was conducted in the United States examined the seafood consumption trends and patterns associated with the major metropolitan areas of the country. The following list expresses the top U.S. seafood cities based on the amount spent annually on fish and seafood at home, originally published by *Seafood Business Magazine*.

CITY	ANNUALLY	AT HOME
1. Honolulu	\$205	7.3%
2. Miami	\$121	5.6%
3. Baltimore	\$118	4.6%
4. New York City	\$116	4.7%
5. Los Angeles	\$104	3.8%
6. Washington, D.C.	\$100	4.3%
7. San Francisco	\$97	3.7%
8. Boston/Philadelphia	\$91	4.6%
9. Anchorage	\$86	2.9%
10. Seattle	\$78	3.0%