

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is part of a major study commissioned by the U.S. Trade Development Bureau of the Department of External Affairs. The objective of this study is to provide a preliminary indication of potential opportunities for the expansion of Canadian exports into the United States through an analysis of U.S. trade statistics and a limited survey of U.S. importers and trade associations from a broad cross-section of U.S. industry. Fish and fish products is one of approximately 80 sectors to be examined during the study.

The results of this study indicate that the devaluation of the U.S. dollar and the implementation of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement provide potential opportunities for expansion of Canadian exports of fish and fish products to the U.S. The analysis indicates that the best opportunities will involve processed fish and fish products, while more limited opportunities may exist for unprocessed salmon, swordfish, hake, and cusk.

Interviews conducted with U.S. importers of fish and fish products confirmed that the devaluation of the U.S. dollar against many developed country currencies has resulted in higher prices paid by U.S. importers for these products. As a result of rising prices for foreign imports and the impending Free Trade Agreement, many U.S. companies are eager to hear more about Canadian suppliers and their products. A large number of the firms identified in this report are also actively seeking new supplies. In addition, a large percentage of U.S. importers indicated that they will increase their purchases of Canadian fish and fish products in the event of a Free Trade Agreement. Lists of U.S. company contacts have been developed during this study and through a comprehensive study of U.S. importers of frozen seafood compiled for the Fisheries and Fish Products Division of the Department of External Affairs (see Volume 2).

U.S. importers interviewed indicated a preference in receiving initial product and company information through direct mailings or personal contact. In making the purchase decision, however, they are likely to use information from a number of other sources including trade fairs and industry publications. A list of the most widely used fairs and publications is also included in this report.