

Cod:

Cod, consumed in dry salt form, is one of the most favoured species in Portugal. The country's annual import requirements are between 80,000 and 90,000 mt, of which 65,000-75,000 mt consists of fish in wet salt form for drying in the country; 10,000/15,000 mt in dry salt form; and about 3,000 mt in frozen state. Atlantic Canada maintains a strong supply position, having shipped 13,852 mt in 1989 valued at \$41.8 million. The other major traditional suppliers to the Portuguese market are Iceland, Norway, Denmark (Faroes/Greenland) and Spain.

Portuguese importers are predominantly interested in Canadian cod of choice black nape, heavy salted 1100-1750 gram fish with a moisture content of 40-44 percent, and for choice wet salted 750-1100 gram fish with a moisture content of 52-55 percent. Preferences for frozen cod is for dressed, head-off 500-1500 gram product. Imported dry cod arrives packed in 25 kg cartons, while wet salt cod is shipped in bulk on 800-1000 kg pallets.

Portuguese demand is steady and quite strong. Stocks of both wet and dry salt product on hand at the beginning of May 1990 are said to have been lower than in the same month in previous years. Supply from traditional sources has been insufficient to meet the country's requirements and prices have been high. Wholesale prices have been stable during the first four months of 1990.

Assuming carry-out stocks will be kept constant and the Portuguese fleet will be able/permitted to catch 14,350 mt of cod, which is Portugal's share of the 39,000 mt quota the EC set for itself for 1990, Portugal would have to purchase at least a further 46,000 mt of wet salt cod this year in order to meet its average annual requirement of 70,000 mt of wet salt product. It therefore can be said the Portuguese salt cod market offers potential sales for Canadian cod.

Due to shortages of Atlantic cod, substantial quantities of Alaskan cod have been moving into the Portuguese market where it is still a relatively unknown product. For the remainder of 1990 it is anticipated that continued comparatively low supply from traditional sources, coupled with reductions in domestic landings, may enhance Alaskan cod sales in Portugal. One major Portuguese cod processor/wholesaler indicated that Norway currently buys Alaskan wet salt cod and USSR frozen cod to supply the Portuguese market in both wet and dry states. There is also a further indication, in anticipation of a decision recently taken (or to be taken soon) by U.S. authorities to ban cod fishing in Atlantic waters, Norway has purchased some 22,000 mt of Alaskan cod in order to build up its stocks.