

Both the Swedish Fish Wholesalers Association and the National Federation of Swedish Fish Wholesalers are comprised of independent wholesalers. The members of these two groups deal mainly in fresh fish and receive most of their supply from local fishermen. Some member firms have some processing capabilities of their own, and many of these firms are also exporters, as well as importers.

Most of the frozen and prepared fish is wholesaled by the large retail chains. In recent years, there has been a general trend for retailers to vertically integrate backwards, taking over the wholesale function themselves. Many of the smaller independent retail outlets have been disappearing in recent years and are being replaced by larger retail stores and associated chains. This trend has enabled retailers to effectively perform many of the wholesale activities.

Representation and Agents

Although agents are still used by many people involved in the fish trade in Sweden, their importance has declined somewhat in recent years. This has been largely due to the tremendous restructuring which has occurred in the Swedish retail trade. Many of the larger retail chains handle their own importing and wholesaling. This has severely hampered the domain in which agents can operate.

Although agents still may sell some products to the larger retail chains, they now depend mainly on the smaller independent stores and the smaller processors for the bulk of their sales. Agents are mainly used in the areas of canned or packaged seafood products. For frozen fish, the role of the agent is not as important, although some companies still choose to use them. A good agent can assist in developing the market and can generally be of service to Canadian seafood exporters.

DOCUMENTATION

A commercial invoice is required of no prescribed form, and the importer must supply a minimum of three copies of the commercial invoice. The invoice must show the name and address of seller (supplier), the name and address of the consignee, date of the invoice, the date of purchase, number and gross weight of the packages, the kind of goods, quantity of goods, the invoice prices for each item (showing freight and insurance separately), discounts, conditions of payment and the terms of sale and delivery. In addition to the commercial invoice, a normal commercial bill of lading is required, and "To Order" bills are acceptable. A suppliers certificate is required when composition of the product will determine the tariff rate. A packing list for imports is not compulsory, but helps to facilitate clearance into Sweden.

Special certificates are required for goods which may be suspected of bringing in contagious aquatic animal diseases, or goods like fishery products, which are subject to a health certificate. Fish and fishery products can only be imported by registered companies which are requested to submit a written declaration that the products are free from disease and non-approved additives. Furthermore, all fishery products must comply with the Swedish Food Act administered by the Ministry of Agriculture.