

LICENSING

Licenses are required in Egypt for private sector imports valued over 100,000 Egyptian pounds. The licenses are issued by the Ministry of Supply, but only if FX allocation requirements fall within the global allocation. While no official discrimination exists against private traders, preferential licensing treatment may be extended to State trading organizations when foreign exchange is scarce.

INSPECTIONS

An industry spokesperson has indicated that the inspection process in Egypt is the most difficult aspect of exporting seafood to the Egyptian market. Seafood exports from Canada to the Egyptian market require the following certification as outlined by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Required are a Certificate of Inspection, Origin and Hygiene (FP 1404) with original and four copies issued by Canadian authorities, certified by the Chamber of Commerce of the city the product was processed in and approved by the Egyptian Embassy stating that: a) the fish were not caught by an explosion method; b) the fish were caught from regions which are not contaminated by atomic radiation, fertilizers, or pesticides; c) date of freezing; and d) that the fish are free of noxious materials or diseases, and that they are suitable for human consumption.

The Embassy in Cairo states that local health standards apparently correspond to those of the EEC, and the inspection process normally requires 7 to 10 days. As noted above, the Embassy in Cairo suggests suppliers should consider insurance coverage against the risk of rejection.

Egyptian regulations covering the importation of frozen fish are as follows: [a] neat, coherent (flesh consistent) and free from any rot, mechanical damage defects and in natural colour, smell and appearance; [b] frozen by well known technical means (preferably not IQF); [c] no preservative chemicals nor antibiotics should be used during processing or after; [d] fish should be free from any harming microbes, or any toxins, and should not be caught by explosive methods, or from any area polluted with radiation or insecticides, and should be free from worms, insects and fungus; [e] temperature in the frozen cabinets where the fish is conserved until arriving to the port of unloading, should not exceed -18 °C; [f] fish should be packed in convenient packages of relatively the same size or in bags of polyethylene in cardboard wrapped tightly so the fish can bear shipping, loading and unloading operations; [g] carton contents should weigh 20 kilograms net weight, and adhere to the labelling requirements provided below; [h] packages should be free of any ice crystals, except for glazing layers; [i] packs should be neat, in good condition, and not torn nor wet by water; and [j] the period between production, preparation, packing and shipping of the product should not exceed two months.

PACKAGING AND LABELLING

Imports to Egypt must have the following packaging and labelling requirements appear on each carton in Arabic: 1) name of the product; 2) name of producer; 3) the statement "Made in Canada"; 4) net and gross weight; 5) production and expiry dates; 6) ingredients; 7) the statement "Keep Frozen Below 0°C"; and 8) the name of the importer. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Canada advises that the complexity of regulations in the Egyptian market makes it imperative to request further information from the importer.