

place in the Italian food tradition. There is no local production, and the major suppliers are Norway, Iceland, Faroes Islands, Spain, Denmark and Canada. Quality is of utmost importance here as well, important aspects being consistent fish size, smoothness of split, consistent moisture content, firmness and whiteness of flesh, absence of blood spots, parasites etc. Given the steady decline in consumption, quality considerations are essential in maintaining or increasing share in this still important market.

Aside from the somewhat unique traditional market for Gaspé cure, there is a general preference for choice medium and small, both white and black wings, of moisture content equivalent to the European 7/8. There is interest in "filettoni", or salted cod fillets of 1-1/2 to 2 lbs size. It should be noted that the product must be comparable to the Norwegian in terms of both quality and price, particularly in view of the advantages of reputation, ease of transport/communications, and the relatively stable currency exchange rates enjoyed by the Norwegians as well as the other EEC and EFTA country suppliers. Italian firms may purchase directly from abroad or through specialized agents. Many companies in the saltfish sector, in particular, are familiar with Canadian product, including the Canadian grading system and terminology. Payment by letter of credit is recommended, especially in initial dealings with Italian companies. The current normal duty rates on frozen whole cod and frozen cod fillets are 12 percent and 10 percent respectively. Salted split cod amounts to 13 percent, and the duty on salted cod fillets is 20 percent. The EEC, however, currently grants exemptions or reduced duty rates for specified quotas of certain cod species/products.

Squid:

Three species of squid are commonly fished in Italian waters, the calamaro or common squid (*Loligo vulgaris*), the totano or European flying squid (*Todarodes sagittatus*) and the totano volatore or Mediterranean flying squid (*Illex coindetti*). Commercially the latter two are generally lumped together, and the only distinction made is between the calamaro and the totano. The former has firmer flesh, consequently better cooking and keeping quality and fetches a significantly higher price. In recent years, the domestic catch has usually been around 7,000 mt of calamaro and some 5,000 mt of totani. Not all of these totals are fished in the Mediterranean, as the Italian ocean fleet also takes squid each year off the coasts of North and South America. Besides domestic production, Italy also currently imports up to 50,000 mt per year from other sources.

Usually the preference is given to *Loligo* species, but depending on prices and availability, significant amounts of *Illex* species will also be purchased. Squid is generally processed into rings for serving in mixed seafood dishes, either