

EUROPE

Europe is Canada's second largest market accounting for approximately 22 per cent of Canada's exports and in recent years has been growing at a faster rate than the US aided by strong European currencies. There is considerable room for expansion in Europe notwithstanding generally high tariffs and a weakening currency situation.

Europe is the largest market for frozen lobster in Brine. The largest single market is France which grew by 40 per cent alone between 1987 and 1988 and is expected to increase again in 1989. Canadian lobsters are heavily promoted at Christmas time in French supermarkets. The UK is a relatively small market for frozen lobster with exports of 138 tonnes valued at \$1.7 million in 1988.

Overall live lobster exports to Europe are a growth product. This is the result both of improved transportation links from Canada and better holding facilities in both Europe and North America. Currently Canada faces strong competition in the live trade from the United States which has become a major force in the past two years. Again France is the major market and the main season is Christmas. At this time of the year lobsters are in relatively short supply and are high priced. We would like to see greater utilization of less expensive lobsters during spring and summer.

Other major live markets are the Netherlands, Belgium, West Germany and the UK. In 1988 Canada's live exports to the UK were 322 tonnes valued at \$4.1 million. While the figure is relatively modest this represents a 30% increase over 1987.

JAPAN

Exports to Japan have grown from virtually nothing in 1983 to \$22 million in 1988. Much of the growth has been due to the heavy promotion of Canadian lobster by family restaurant chains. Perhaps a similar approach perhaps could be undertaken in the UK. Japan currently has a high inventory of lobsters because local customs dictated refraining from eating such red meat in deference to the dead emperor. In Japan the colour red is the symbol of death.