

SINGAPORE

Singapore's domestic fishing fleet supplies only 10 percent of overall seafood consumption, the other 90 percent imported. With a solid and expanding economy, Singapore has a population of 2.8 million and enjoys one of the highest per capita incomes in Asia, second only to Japan. Dynamic growth is reflected in the seafood industry, where total imports averaged over US\$440 million since 1990. The Singapore market for seafood is large with a per capita consumption of 32kg per annum, one of the highest in Asia. Singapore seafood consumption trends have taken on a healthy trend, with consumers making purchasing decisions based on nutrition and caloric intake. Total imports of crustaceans to the Singapore market in 1991 were 3,342 MT, of which approximately 5-8 MT were lobster products. Lobsters are considered a delicacy in Singapore, and are generally consumed during festive occasions or celebrations. Lobster is rarely consumed in individual households, but rather is available in Singapore restaurants, hotels and catering establishments.

The preferred form for imported lobsters are live, which are cooked fresh for the individual customer. To a lesser extent, frozen lobsters are popular with Singapore hotels which frequently prepare extensive seafood buffets. The main competition in the Singapore market for imported lobster products is from lobster and crayfish caught in the region, from countries such as Malaysia, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, and rock lobster from Australia. Local Singapore importers have recently begun to import lobster from Boston and Maine. Lobster is distributed through Singapore seafood wholesalers and importers who service the institutional market including hotels, restaurants and catering establishments. Lobster is not popular in the Singapore retail sector, and only a handful of retail stores actually carry lobster products. Live lobsters are the most popular, and most major Singapore seafood distributors have facilities available to store live lobster products. Seafood products in demand in Singapore include exotic high value species such as lobster. Knowledge is limited in Singapore with respect to the availability of *Homarus* spp. in the marketplace. Singapore importers prefer local species of lobster. Ideally, international lobster exporters should work with local Singapore importers to organize lobster promotion events in the market, and try to create increased awareness amongst the trade and consumers.

SOUTH KOREA

South Korean per capita seafood consumption was 28.93 kg in 1992. South Korea imported fish products worth US\$446 million in 1992, and with declining access to foreign fishing grounds, prospects for imported seafood products are very promising. Growth of an affluent middle class in South Korea has recently led to a burgeoning market for imported seafood products, including lobsters. The South Korean market supports high prices for imported products which are perceived as premium quality. Frozen lobster is used in South Korean hotel buffets and in up-scale Japanese restaurants, especially Tapa-Nya-Ki seafood restaurants. Fresh lobster and rock lobster is consumed in raw form {sashimi} in the more affluent South Korean households. Lobsters are generally shelled during preparation, so they can be eaten with chopsticks. Lobster is an essential ingredient, along with locally cultured shrimps and prawns, in the Tapa-Nya-Ki restaurants. Retail prices are expensive by North American standards, with live lobster sold from holding tanks in South Korean restaurants selling for approximately Cdn\$20.00-Cdn\$25.00 per pound. South Korea imported 73.1 MT of lobster products in 1993 valued at US\$1.28 million {comprised 35.3 MT live; 37.8 MT frozen}. As of late 1994, prices for imported lobster from North America were US\$17.00 per kilogram, or Cdn\$13.00-Cdn\$15.00 per pound.

1993 South Korean Lobster Imports

<i>Product Form</i>	<i>Kilograms</i>	<i>US\$</i>
Total Live Imports	35,258	545,242
Canada	28,098	437,087
United States	6,667	95,898
Australia	390	9,857
New Zealand	103	2,400
Total Frozen Imports	37,838	732,520
United States	23,539	472,587
Canada	13,367	235,824
Australia	632	13,076
New Zealand	300	11,033

Source: Canadian Embassy, Seoul.