

SWISS SEAFOOD MARKET IN BRIEF

1. Switzerland has one of the highest per capita incomes among industrialized countries. Canadian seafood exporters selecting multilingual Switzerland as a test market can draw valuable conclusions with respect to consumer preferences in major Western European markets and their ability to compete in Europe on the basis of price and quality. Swiss buyers insist on quality and service from their traditional suppliers in Europe, and they expect the same treatment from Canadian firms.
2. Total landings from the inland fishery in Switzerland increased from 2,900 tons in 1970, to 2,680 tons in 1987. Exploited fish species in Switzerland include: European eel, landlocked shad, brown trout, char, coregonids, grayling, pike, several species of cyprinids, especially bream, roach, tench, common carp, burbot, European perch, and pike-perch. Lake perch is a traditional favourite that is in limited supply. Canadian exporters can always find ready buyers for freshwater perch to meet the strong Swiss demand.
3. Swiss seafood imports totalled 49,002 MT in 1990, of which, 30,884 MT was comprised of fish and seafood, and 18,118 MT of fish and seafood preparations. Switzerland is an excellent market for high-value and value-added seafood products including: frozen yellow perch fillets; fresh yellow perch fillets; coldwater shrimp; frozen salmon; cod; live lobster; canned products; processed fish products; frozen scallops; and walleye/pickarel fillets.
4. Total Canadian exports of fisheries products to Switzerland in 1990 were \$18.1 million Cdn. The total was made up of \$3.1 million in fish, whole or dressed; \$9.8 million of fish, fillets and blocks; \$0.8 million of fish, preserved; \$0.2 million of fish, canned; and \$4.1 million of other fishery foods and feeds.
5. The Canadian Embassy in Berne has estimated the major competing countries in the Swiss seafood market to be: Denmark 21.2 percent; France 12.5 percent; Norway 10.1 percent; Netherlands 8.3 percent; and Germany 6.2 percent.
6. Factors contributing to the current success of Canadian seafood exports include: duty free entry into Switzerland; absence of significant import restrictions; aggressive Canadian marketing; participation in trade fairs and missions; and competitive pricing. Canada has strong capabilities to provide key fish species desired by Swiss consumers and for certain species is one of the few sources of supply.
7. Factors that occasionally hinder Canadian export success include: non-competitive pricing in certain cases; lack of supply of certain species; and failure to supply less-than-container load (LCL) lots as are available from European competitors.