

MARKET ACCESS

An industry spokesperson has indicated that the inspection process in Egypt is the most difficult aspect of exporting seafood to the Egyptian market. Egypt has historically used import licensing and foreign exchange allocations to regulate the inflow of imports. During the 1960's and early 1970's, trade in Egypt was dominated by State trading corporations and bilateral deals with COMECON countries. Egypt is a member of a trade bloc which includes Iraq, Jordan and Yemen. The country has moved toward trade liberalisation since that time with open door (*infitah*) policies by allowing private Egyptian firms to use their foreign exchange resources for seafood imports.

Foreign owned companies must acquire the services of an Egyptian agent in order to import goods into the country. Goods considered to be luxury articles or goods in production in Egypt are banned from importation, in addition, trade with South Africa is banned. The majority of seafood imports into Egypt were handled by the Egyptian Fish Marketing Company which is a public company. The market can now be accessed with private importers and through the tender system which the Egyptian government controls with import permits based on the successful bids on the tenders.

The Egyptian market for seafood products is at the moment a commodity market with opportunities for short-term large sales due to the trade regulation by authorities. It can be very difficult for Canadian seafood exporters to develop long-term trade relationships in the Egyptian market and firms should reflect in advance on whether or not the investment is appropriate for the situation.

DOCUMENTATION

The following documentation is required for exports to Egypt. Three copies of the commercial invoice are required and must be presented for approval to the Egyptian Embassy. Three copies of the certificate of origin, certified by a Chamber of Commerce, must also be presented to the Egyptian Embassy. The buyer's import license must be certified by an authorized bank so that a letter of credit can be opened. The importer must obtain a statement from customs that arrival is in conformity with the bill of lading.

Four copies of the shipper's export declaration are required. The exporter needs a certificate of insurance and a packing list is required. Consular fees apply and all documents must be legalized by the Egyptian Embassy. Canadian exporters should ascertain from the buyer and the Egyptian Embassy the exact number of copies to be legalized. A sanitary certificate and documentation relating to food additives may be necessary. Complex regulations in these areas make it essential for exporters to request further information from the importer.

PRICES AND TERMS

Prices paid by Egyptian importers are generally based on European price structures and can be located by referring to INFOFISH. The Canadian Embassy in Cairo can supply current reference prices to interested Canadian exporters. Quotations are preferred in Egyptian pounds, Pounds Sterling, or U.S. dollars, on a C.I.F. value basis. Prices should be in CIF Alexandria and FOB per ton, and the Egyptian Government committee is entitled to increase or decrease the quantity. All offers must be accompanied by a provisional and unconditional loan guarantee worth 2 percent.