

ISRAEL

SUPPLY & CONSUMPTION

Until recently, the import of lobsters and other shellfish was banned due to Kashrut Laws (dietary laws). The ban has now been lifted, however, imports are minimal due to the restricted market size. Lobsters cannot be sold in major supermarket chains or in local hotels. Therefore, the market for live lobsters is in select restaurants only. For processed lobster products, the local market would include deli stores. There were no imports prior to 1992, and no other statistics are available.

DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS

A local importer takes over an exclusive arrangement. For processed products, an importer can also be the distributor. Importers have to deal with a lengthy bureaucratic process of obtaining a licence from the Ministry of Agriculture.

PHYTOSANITARY REGULATIONS

An import licence is required. The Ministry of Agriculture grants the licence conditional upon a Canadian veterinary inspection certificate and approval from the Ministry of Health. For live and processed shellfish, approval from the Ministry of Health, Food Inspection Branch, is required. A sample must be sent for laboratory inspection prior to shipment. For further shipments from the same supplier, spot checks will be performed.

TARIFFS/NTB'S

Live fresh lobsters enter Israel duty free (H.S.0306.11 and 0306.12). There is no duty on lobsters boiled in water, but a 40% duty per ton, plus 2% tax is applied to others (0306.21 and 0306.22). Processed lobster products (1605.3) face a 40% duty per kilo, and 2% tax.

POST COMMENTS

The market is minimal, with a projection that sales could reach 200 live lobsters per week. The cost to the consumer is approximately Cdn\$40.00 per kilo. The market for processed lobster is also minimal. Because of the size of the market, sales would be restricted to small deli stores and restaurants only. In addition, shipping distance and prohibitive costs do not allow for substantial market development. However, live lobsters imported from Nova Scotia as of October 1992, received extensive publicity from all food writers in the printed media, largely due to the novelty of the item. In the future, promotional activities should be limited to the potential market share.

IMPORTERS/USERS

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