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Croatia

Fishery Products

Market Brief

2005

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Report Highlights:

Despite Croatia's lengthy Adriatic coastline, the country struggles to catch and produce seafood. From 2000 to 2004, Croatia's seafood imports increased from \$33 million to \$71 million, a 114 percent increase with the trend expected to continue. Moreover, Croatia imports between \$1 to 2 million of seafood from the United States annually. Demand for seafood is increasing, as Croatia becomes a more popular tourist destination--making it an excellent market for U.S. seafood exports.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
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Market Situation & Overview

Despite Croatia's lengthy Adriatic coastline, the country struggles to catch and produce seafood. In addition, Croatia lacks adequate fishing vessels, as well as the infrastructure to transport and process seafood. However, the demand for seafood is increasing, as Croatia becomes a more popular tourist destination--making Croatia an excellent market for U.S. seafood.

Currently, Croatia produces vast quantities of a limited number of species resulting in lower prices for these fish species. Croatia is looking to introduce new indigenous fish and shellfish species, as well as modernizing its existing fishing and processing facilities--focusing especially on tuna fish, sea bass, and gilthead sea bream breeding. Several years ago Croatia began developing tuna farming for exports to the Japanese market.

The fish population in the Adriatic Sea is low, but the diversity of species is very wide. In 2003, the registered catch of sea-fish and other marine organisms was 26,181 MT. Small blue fish dominates (73%) the catch and supplies most of the capacity of the fish processing plants.

Croatia has 10 fish processing plants that manufacture a variety of fish products and product 15,000 tons of products annually (with 70% being canned sardines). In the early 1990s, Croatia was at war and some manufacturing facilities were on the verge of bankruptcy and some were shut down because of decreased production. However, the government intervened and offered monetary compensation to canned fish processors, as well as offered cheaper fuel to fishermen.

Croatia has more than a 1000-year-long tradition of fishing. This shows the significance of maritime activities and fishing which was traditionally the most important activity in the coastal and island areas of Croatia. Fishing, fish breeding, and processing are still important sectors in the local economy.

Market Size and Trends

In 2002 (latest available statistic), the annual average consumption of seafood per household member was only 6.86 kg. However, as Croatia's tourist industry continues to grow the demand for seafood will increase.

Imports and Exports

Although Croatia exports seafood, imports are also quite significant (see following table). Moreover, Croatia's seafood imports increased from \$33 million in 2000 to \$71 million in 2004, representing a 113.7% increase with the trend expected to continue. In 2003, Croatia imported fish mostly from Spain (\$19.1 million), the Netherlands (\$ 9.4 million), Denmark (\$7.8 million), and Italy (\$6.3 million). From 2001 to 2003, Croatia imported between \$1 to 2 million of seafood from the United States, and there is still much potential for the U.S. to expand seafood exports to Croatia.

In 2003, tuna fish accounted for more than 74% of total fish exports. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Austria are Croatia's most important markets for canned fish. Most of Croatia's fresh and chilled fish exports go to Japan (mostly bred tuna fish) and Italy.

CROATIA FISH & SEAFOOD IMPORTS & EXPORTS

Reporting Country: Croatia Top 5 Ranking	Import				Export			
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2000	2001	2002	2003
	1000\$	1000\$	1000\$	1000\$	1000\$	1000\$	1000\$	1000\$
Spain	7,541	18,943	12,480	19,108	3,785	64	1	101
France	336	148	241	9,887	0	63	0	32
Netherlands	682	1,187	3,692	9,448	1,070	0	36	25
Denmark	1,487	5,626	8,387	7,829	0	0	4	14
Italy	4,528	6,095	8,203	6,345	10,017	11,174	14,546	19,698
Other	18,543	24,575	42,888	29,295	29,108	52,777	65,279	94,930
World	33,119	56,571	75,897	81,926	43,977	64,081	79,868	114,801
	Croatian Stat. Institute import 2004				Croatian Stat. Institute export 2004			
World	70,778				104,010			

NA - Data not available (not reported) Data: Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HS 6 Digit)

Source: FAS' Global Agricultural Trade System using data from the United Nations Statistical Office

Tariffs 2005

The United States and most of the 37 countries with which Croatia has a bilateral agreement fall under the WTO tariff schedule for seafood that range from 5% to 25% for HS codes 1603 and 1604 (processed seafood). For HS codes 0301 to 0307 (fresh seafood), tariffs range from 5% to 20%.

For countries with which Croatia has a bilateral agreement, some serve as strong competitors to the United States (such as EU countries) and have tariff quotas, lower tariffs, or even free access for some products.

(Note: Check the latest applied custom rates on the following web page:
<http://www.carina.hr>)

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A list of Croatian seafood importers is available to U.S. seafood exporters and can be obtained by contacting:

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