



Fisheries Council of Canada  
Conseil Canadien des Pêches



# MARKET ACCESS

## Overview

Fish and seafood is one of the most globally traded food commodities and Canada is a net exporter in this commodity. Canada enjoys a strong seafood brand in export markets as a result of our robust fisheries management regulatory regime, our world-leading adoption of third-party sustainability certifications, and Canada's strong food safety system.

In 2023, the following five countries accounted for roughly 89% of Canada's total fish and seafood exports in value:

1. United States of America (63.7%)
2. China (18.9%)
3. Hong Kong (2.5%)
4. Japan (2.5%)
5. United Kingdom (1.6%)

Ongoing development and maintenance of strong trade agreements is essential to the success of the Canadian fisheries industry. At the same time, Canada must remain diligent to anticipate and mitigate non-tariff trade barriers initiated by foreign governments. The federal Market Access Secretariat is a great partner in this respect.

## Objective

**Assist the government as it negotiates and builds trading relationships with other nations.**

## Key Messages

1. Canada enjoys a strong seafood brand in export markets as a result of our robust fisheries management regulatory regime, our world-leading adoption of third-party certification, and Canada's strong food safety system.
2. Canada fish and seafood products are exported to over 100 different countries per year, however the vast majority (89%) of products are exported to only five countries.
3. The Canadian seafood industry has the opportunity to continue building strong relationships with other nations through the Indo-Pacific Strategy and various on-going trade negotiations.
4. China is a vital trade partner for the Canadian seafood industry with it being the only market for certain species. This needs to be recognized in diversification strategies.



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## Background & Facts

Fish and seafood is one of, if not the most, globally traded commodity and the need for strong market access to export these products is vital. Canada is a net exporter of these products with Canada's total export value in 2023 reaching roughly \$7.6 billion, while Canada's imports were \$4.1 billion, equalling about a 2 to 1 ratio in favour of exports.

Of the fish and seafood products exported from Canada, 75% of the total exports by value can be attributed to four product groupings: lobster (35%), crabs (20%), salmon (14%), and shrimp and prawns (6%). Products being imported into Canada differ and are much more varied: the top four product groupings account for only 56% of total import values. The top four import product groupings are: salmon (24%), shrimp and prawns (17%), lobster (8%), and tuna (7%).

The Canadian fisheries industry is interested in the development of several trade strategies and negotiations organized by the federal government, including:

- **The Indo-Pacific Strategy**, which pays particular attention to Australia, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, China, India, Japan, Pacific Island Countries, the Republic of Korea and New Zealand;
- **Canada-UK Free Trade Agreement Negotiations**, which will replace the Canada-UK Trade Continuity Agreement (TCA) that took effect following the UK leaving the EU;
- **Other negotiations:**
  - Canada – Indonesia
  - Canada – ASEAN FTA
  - Canada – Mercosur FTA

On occasion foreign governments propose and/or implement measures that represent non-tariff barriers. Sometimes with intent and sometimes without. Canada – government and industry together – must be diligent to anticipate and mitigate these barriers before they disrupt trade. The federal Market Access Secretariat – a joint effort by AAFC and CFIA – is a great partner in this respect.