

Spain, Canning sector considers it 'essential' to increase tuna loin quota

The canning seafood sector from Spain and European Union (EU) considers it absolutely necessary to achieve a quota of tuna loins amounting to 30,000 tonnes at zero tariff, and with an automatic increase clause of 20 per cent.

Industrialists argue that these measures will enable the industry to ensure the raw material required to maintain their processing activity in the EU and in the country.

These objectives were exposed by the European seafood processing and canning industry of the European Commission (EC), in a meeting attended by Stefaan Depypere, general director of Markets and International Relations of the Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the European Commission (DGMARE).

The meeting was also attended by Christian Rambaud, Head of Trade and Market Union of DGMARE; and Barbara Focquet, director of Policies of the entity.

To the National Association of Canned Fish and Shellfish Manufacturers (ANFACO-CECOPECA), the need for quota is unquestionable.

"It is demonstrated that the target fact that all multiple autonomous tariff quotas for fisheries products that the EU opens, in recent years systematically the quota of tuna loins is the first one to run out," stated the Association in a press release.

The quota for the period between 2016 and 2018 it is considered critical to the competitiveness of the canning industry, as having an adequate supply of tuna loins is essential to maintain the competitiveness and viability of the sector at the local and community level.

Thus, the canning industry would be able not to rely solely on the whole frozen tuna supply.

ANFACO also stressed that for some years, the EU has promoted preferential access to the EU market for canned tuna from third countries, mainly through bilateral trade agreements with countries in Southeast Asia and other countries, such as Ecuador.

"The canning industry matches the priorities set by the EC, who notes that currently in the field of Community policies, factors such as employment, growth and the generation of added value in Europe must be priorities," added the Association.

Moreover, it stressed that the European canning industry needs to supply whole frozen tuna and tuna loins according to the different strategies of each company.

Currently, the EU imports about 106,000 tonnes of tuna loins. Of these, a small part comes through this quota, which not only supplies the Spanish canning industry, but also the industries in Italy, France and Portugal, among other countries.

The canning industry claimed its right to be competitive and maintain its industrial activity in Spain and Europe, so it insists that it is essential to have "raw material from various sources of supply, an aspect for which this quota plays an important role".

ANFACO also criticizes the attitude of the General Secretariat of Fisheries Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment (MAGRAMA) because in its opinion it pays attention to and "exclusively defends the fisheries sector completely disregarding the needs of the canning industry."

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