

German seafood sales setting new retail records, pandemic drives up consumption

German consumers bought 401,000 metric tons (MT) of seafood in retail channels last year, spending EUR 4.1 billion (USD 4.9 billion) in the process. While the volume was on par with 2018, the value represented an increase of 4.8 percent, and set a new sales record, trade association Fisch-Informationszentrum (FIZ) has confirmed.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further lifted sales, with Hamburg-based FIZ identifying double-digit increases in both the volume and value of seafood sales in the opening six months of this year. Retail seafood sales for the period totaled 236,665 MT and a new first-half high value of EUR 2.4 billion (USD 2.8 billion), up 14.8 percent and 16.5 percent year-on-year, respectively.

For the full-year 2020, and factoring in the temporary shutdown of the restaurant and foodservice sectors, FIZ is expecting seafood purchases in retail to increase by 124,000 MT (catch weight), while out-of-home consumption will decrease by 110,500 MT.

Overall, its preliminary data points to an increase of 1.5 percent in the per-capita consumption of seafood this year – up to a level of 13.5 kilograms. The market's most popular seafood products continue to be Alaska pollock, salmon, tuna, herring, and shrimp.

Expanding on the analysis, FIZ Managing Director Matthias Keller told SeafoodSource that COVID-19 has so far had no major negative impact on seafood supply chains for seafood in Germany.

“The opposite has to be noted. Without functioning supply chains, it would not have been possible to follow increasing orders by the retail partners to fill the empty shelves

in the supermarkets. Over the first seven months of 2020, the sales of fish and seafood increased by 15 percent in volume,” he said. “COVID-19 has, however, changed the proportion of consumption at-home and out-of-home. A first calculation of the FIZ indicates, that at the end of 2020, fish consumption will end up [with] a small increase of 1.5 percent, while at home consumption will increase its share from 75 percent to 85 percent of the total consumption, and the share of out-of-home will decrease from 25 percent to 15 percent.”

With regards to the retail sector itself, Keller highlighted that more than 50 percent of the fish and seafood consumption in Germany is met by frozen and canned products.

These two categories saw the largest increase in sales volumes in the January through July period, but there has also been sustained growth in fresh fish sales.

In 2018, and for the first time, German consumers spent more on fresh products than on frozen or canned seafood, Keller said.

This trend continued in 2019 with almost EUR 1.1 billion (USD 1.3 billion) spent on fresh and defrosted fish, while frozen product sales amounted to less than EUR 1.05 billion (USD 1.2 billion).

Keller advised that the market development also endured throughout the first seven months of this year.

To help meet the market demand, Germany imported 923,029 MT of fish and seafood last year, valued at EUR 4.8 billion (USD 5.7 billion). It's number-one supplier in volume and value terms was Poland, largely thanks to its large salmon and herring processing capabilities. Denmark was another important E.U. supplier, while China was its most important third-country source.

According to FIZ's data, Poland provided the German market with 123,563 MT of products worth EUR 887.2 million (USD 1.1 billion) in 2019, Denmark supplied 99,513

MT valued at EUR 413.1 million (USD 490.3 million), and China contributed 128,665 MT valued at EUR 462.4 million (USD 548.8 million).

“Sales of fresh and defrosted fish fillets and partly whole fish like trout, seabass and seabream offered in [modified atmosphere packaging] have been shaping consumption in recent years and today,” Keller said. “By extending the range of products with portions of raw and spiced tuna fillets, the consumer is willing to accept that these species are sold at much higher prices.”

German consumers have also welcomed sushi products offered by restaurants and prepacked by supermarkets.

“Sushi has become part of the German diet and is stable in development,” he said.

Meanwhile, the recent report “EU – Frozen Fish Fillet – Market Analysis, Forecast, Size, Trends and Insights,” published by IndexBox, finds that Germany is the bloc’s largest market for frozen fillets, consuming 275,000 MT last year. It was followed by the United Kingdom and France with 193,000 MT and 155,000 MT, respectively.

Together these three markets accounted for 48 percent of the E.U.’s total consumption. They also represented 51 percent of the value, with sales in the German and U.K. markets both amounting to USD 1.2 billion (EUR 901 million), followed by France with USD 901 million (EUR 759.2 million).

Germany was also the E.U.’s leading frozen fish fillet importing country last year, bringing in 339,000 MT or USD 1.5 billion (EUR 1.3 billion) worth of products.

Lien article :

<https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/foodservice-retail/german-seafood-sales-setting-new-retail-records-pandemic-drives-up-consumption>