

2020: A new record for Mackerel and strong year for herring exports

Mackerel is the second largest species in the catching sector.

- The export volume of mackerel in 2020 totalled 300,000 tonnes.
- Export value ended on a new record with NOK 5 billion.
- Export volume increased 26 per cent from 2019.
- Export value increased by NOK 693 million, or 16 per cent.

"With an increase in the mackerel quota of 41 per cent from 2019, it was in the cards that the export volume would increase significantly in 2020. Usually leads to a sharp increase in supply to a correspondingly sharp fall in price, but good demand in important markets such as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan caused the price drop to be a moderate 7 per cent", says Jan Eirik Johnsen, Manager for Pelagic Strategy with the Norwegian Seafood Council.

"In addition to the fact that mackerel is strong in the food culture in our important Asian markets, we have in recent years seen a significant product development, increased focus on healthy food and increased sales through e-commerce, especially in South Korea. All these factors have contributed to raising the consumption of Norwegian mackerel", says Jan Eirik Johnsen.

Strong year for herring exports

Herring experienced strong value growth last year.

- 316,000 tonnes of herring were exported in 2020.
- The value of herring exports was NOK 3.8 billion.
- Export volume fell by 11 per cent.
- Export value increased by NOK 590 million, or 18 per cent.



"History has shown us that herring is doing well in times of crisis, and that was also the case this time. In Germany, which is our most important herring market and where herring consumption has been declining for some time, we saw that the demand for especially canned herring jumped when the corona crisis occurred", says Jan Eirik Johnsen, Manager for Pelagic Strategy with the Norwegian Seafood Council

In total, the consumption of herring in Germany increased by 10 per cent last year. - We saw the same development in our second most important herring market, Poland. The increased demand in these markets led to a shift in exports from whole frozen herring to fillets and processed products at a higher price, says Jan Eirik Johnsen.

Exports of herring roe set a solid new record in 2020. Export volume increased by 53 per cent and prices increased by 73 per cent compared with 2019. This gave an export value of NOK 430 million.

"Lack of capelin fishing and thus lack of capelin roe in the market resulted in a sharp increase in the demand for herring roe. Herring roe has become a premium product", says Jan Eirik Johnsen.

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