



FAS WORLDWIDE

United States Department of Agriculture
Foreign Agricultural Service

June 2005

An online review of Foreign Agricultural Service initiatives and services

Commodities and Products

Exports of U.S. Mackerel Rising: Record Three-Month Sales Achieved in Many Markets

By Joel Chetrick

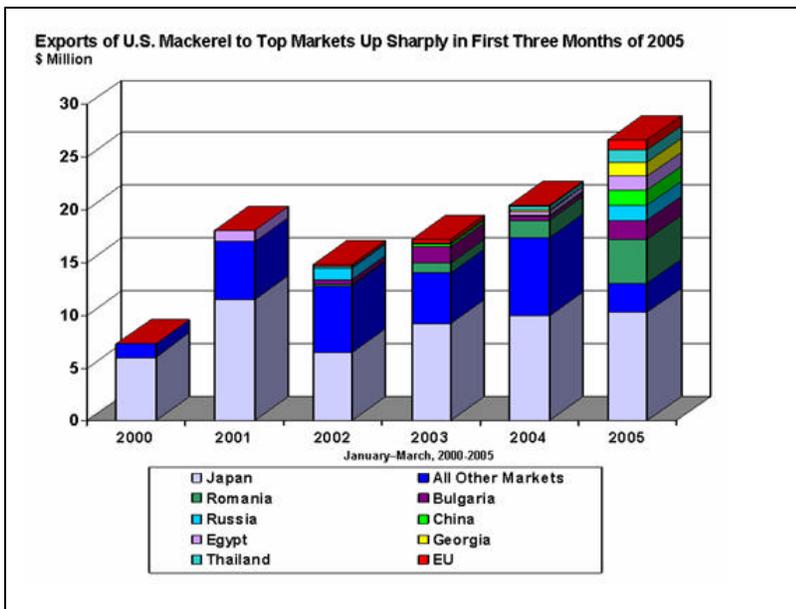
Calendar 2005 has the makings of a breakout year for exports of U.S. mackerel, as first-quarter export sales jumped 30 percent by value and 29 percent by volume above sales achieved during the first three months of 2004. The 2005 three-month export volume totaled 23,042 metric tons, valued at \$26.6 million.

Although Japan, with sales valued at \$10.3 million, remains by far the largest export destination, U.S. mackerel has made significant inroads in other international markets. First-quarter mackerel exports rose in nearly all regions, and records were set in several markets. There were record exports to Romania, with sales valued at \$4.2 million (up 154 percent), and Bulgaria, with sales of \$1.8 million (up 384 percent). Record exports also were achieved in Russia and China, with sales in each country exceeding \$1.4

million, Georgia with \$1.3 million and Thailand with \$1.1 million.

Record exports to the EU (European Union)—which registered \$1 million—were five times greater than the 2004 level. However, even more U.S. mackerel was destined for the region, as a great deal of product was reprocessed in Eastern Europe and subsequently shipped to EU markets. Also, Egypt reemerged as a large importer of U.S. mackerel with purchases of nearly \$1.4 million.

A significant factor in these gains is the emergence of Atlantic mackerel from the United States, which has become well accepted by international seafood buyers. The strong export marketing efforts of enterprising mackerel processors from the Northeast United States have yielded results. In recent years, a number of U.S. mackerel processors have built new plants and installed new processing and freezing equipment. In addition, the quality of the fish has improved greatly. U.S. Atlantic mackerel are reported to be increasing in



size and fat content, two characteristics that appeal to foreign buyers.

Trade reports from the 2005 European Seafood Exhibition (April 26-28 in Brussels, Belgium) indicated very strong international demand for U.S. product, and significant sales were made during the show. U.S. mackerel exporters are optimistic, as the 2005 outlook for exports of Atlantic mackerel and other mackerel from the United States appears very positive.

The author is an agricultural marketing specialist in the FAS Forest and Fishery Products Division. Tel.: (202) 720-3248, E-mail: Joel.Chetrick@usda.gov

FAS Worldwide is an online magazine from USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. Text of this magazine is in the public domain and may be reprinted freely. Photographs may not be reprinted without permission.

Use of commercial and trade names does not imply approval or constitute endorsement by USDA or by FAS.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.