



## Market and Trade Data

### Record Six-Month Exports of U.S. Frozen Mackerel to EU Eclipse 2005 Sales

By Joel Chetrick

Sales of frozen mackerel from the United States, mainly Atlantic mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*), have hit a new high in the EU (European Union).

From January through June 2006, U.S. frozen mackerel exports registered \$19.39 million, setting a new sales record that surpassed the previous \$1.84 million record to the EU during calendar 2005. The 2006 exports exceeded January-June 2005 sales by a margin of \$18.04 million. In quantity terms, 2006 exports totaled 17,993 metric tons compared to 1,858 tons during the first half of 2005.

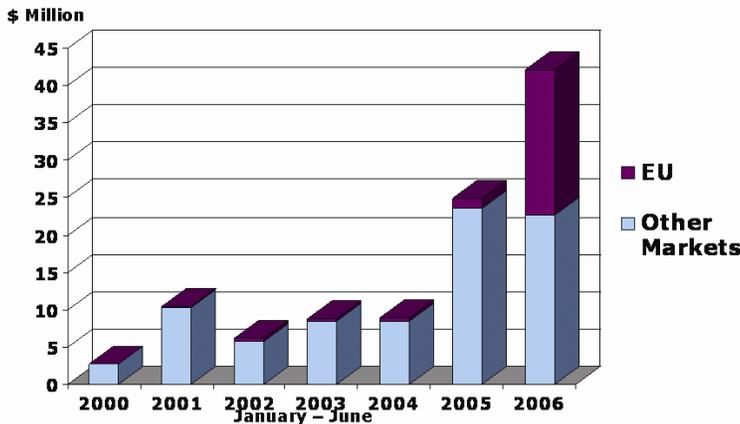
From January through June 2006, the unit value of U.S. frozen mackerel exported to the EU averaged \$1,078 per ton, up 48 percent from the same period in 2005 (\$728 per ton). Increased prices for mackerel reflected lower domestic supply in the EU.

*Lower domestic supplies and strong demand have greatly increased export opportunities in the EU for U.S. mackerel, which U.S. exporters have met with consistent quality product.*

Trade sources report that lower mackerel harvests by fishermen in the U.K. (United Kingdom) and Ireland (two of the largest mackerel producers in the EU) have resulted in increased demand by EU processors for imported product.

New developments point to continued export growth. One such factor is the recently announced EU prohibition on French fishermen's mackerel harvests (effective Sept. 16, 2006 through the end of the year), as France's 2006 mackerel quota has been filled. In addition, preliminary reports of 2007 mackerel quota reductions for EU fishermen (pending final decision by the EU Fisheries Council) have fueled European processors' interest in new sources of mackerel. These developments have greatly increased export opportunities in the EU for U.S.

**Six-Month Sales of U.S. Frozen Mackerel: Exports Trend Up With a Bonus From the Growing EU Market**  
*EU sales for January-June 2006 soared to a record \$19.39 million, over 14 times higher than the record-high sales for January-June 2005.*



Mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*, *Scomber australasicus*, and *Scomber japonicus*), excluding fillets, livers, and roes

*During the first half of 2006, the EU accounted for 46.1 percent of U.S. frozen mackerel exports by value, compared to 5.4 percent for the first six months of 2005.*

U.S. Frozen Mackerel Exports to Major Regional Destinations							
\$ Million							
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
January – June							
EU	0	0.12	0.44	0.37	0.42	1.35	19.39
North Africa	0	1.03	0	0	0.68	3.53	8.07
Other Europe	0	0.05	0.48	3.67	2.86	9.28	4.59
Sub-Saharan Africa	0	3.04	1.45	2.96	0.08	0.07	2.46
Former Soviet Union	0.03	0	0.15	0.11	0.45	3.29	2.41
All Other Regions	2.75	6.21	3.75	1.70	4.43	7.35	5.17
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.78</b>	<b>10.45</b>	<b>6.27</b>	<b>8.81</b>	<b>8.92</b>	<b>24.87</b>	<b>42.09</b>

Mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*, *australasicus*, and *japonicus*), excluding fillets, livers, and roes

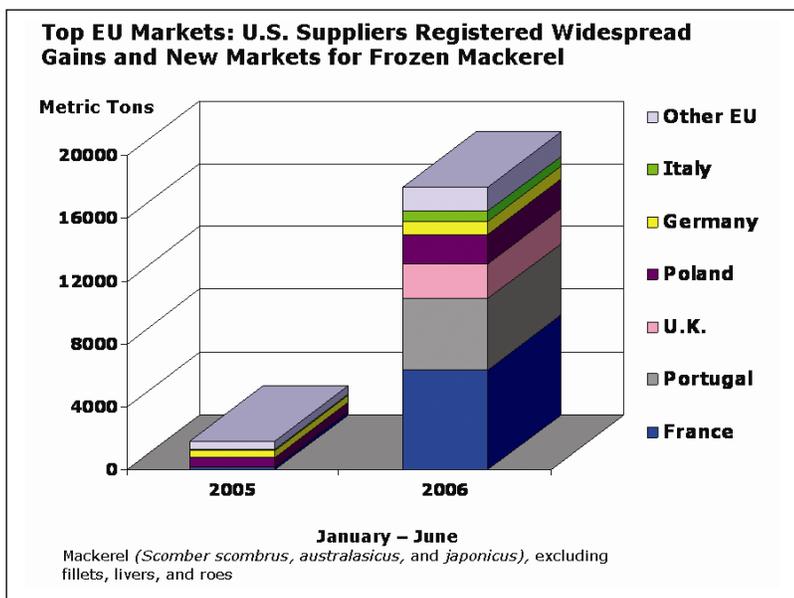
product, and U.S. suppliers are well positioned to meet the demand.

During the first half of 2006, the EU accounted for 46.1 percent of U.S. frozen mackerel exports by value, compared to 5.4 percent for the first six months of 2005. The leading EU destinations for U.S. product included France, with sales of 6,358 tons valued at \$6.6 million, and Portugal, with sales of

4,534 tons worth nearly \$5.7 million. Exports to the U.K. and Poland totaled 2,212 tons and 1,905 tons, respectively, and the sales value to each of these markets exceeded \$2.0 million. Industry sources indicate that U.S. frozen mackerel is used mainly for canning and in the production of various processed products, such as salads and other value-added foods.

Other large markets for mackerel include Egypt (with U.S. exports exceeding \$8 million for January-June 2006), as well as Nigeria, Bulgaria, and Romania (with sales to each market exceeding \$2 million). Although Atlantic mackerel is exported year-round, most sales occur during the first half of the year, coinciding with the U.S. harvesting season, which takes place during January through April in waters from New England to North Carolina.

U.S. harvests and exports from the New England and Middle Atlantic states have risen substantially in recent years due to the construction of shore-side production facilities that



utilize Dutch and Norwegian processing and packaging methods. Atlantic mackerel landings in 2004 (the most recent year for which data are available) totaled 55,001 tons, up from 30,922 tons in 2003 and lower levels in previous years. Although some in the industry expect mackerel prices to decrease, the long-term outlook remains positive for U.S. suppliers, as buyers worldwide seek new sources and consistent mackerel supplies. ■

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