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Contemporary methodology of marketing at the development of aquaculture

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SUMMARY - The development and the expansion of the market of aquaculture products is supported by different strategical movements; as the publicity to be done and the quality standards that aquacultures must keep in order to rely on the quality and delivery of their products. This work explains different marketing data and strategies that Greek and Mediterranean aquacultures may consider towards an optimal development of this sector.

Key words: Aquaculture, Greece, Marketing.

RESUME - "Méthodologie contemporaine de commercialisation pour le développement de l'aquaculture". Le développement et l'expansion du marché des produits aquacoles est soutenu par différentes tendances stratégiques, par la publicité à réaliser, ainsi que par les normes de qualité que l'aquaculture doit mettre en oeuvre afin de mieux garantir la qualité et la distribution de ses produits. Le présent article explique différentes données de commercialisation et stratégies que l'aquaculture grecque et méditerranéenne devrait considérer en vue d'un développement optimal de ce secteur.

Mots-clés : Aquaculture, Grèce, Commercialisation.

INTRODUCTION

At first on behalf of Nireus S.A. I would like to thank the organizational commission of the seminar for its invitation to take part and express our opinion about the problems which, our sector faces for the promotion of our products in the Countries of Europe.

Taking for granted the belief of some Greek Aquaculturers that the future belongs to the sea and that the sea will finally feed our planet for the next decades, the Greek Aquaculturers continue their rapid route for the conquest of the European Markets and the enormous increase of their production.

This increase production was neither combined with the reduction of the cost of the products nor with the organization of the companies and their modernization in subjects of disposal, trading, financial and many others. The result of this fact was the rapid fall of the prices, even below cost, the difficulty to sale the products, the loss of many billions from insecure customers and the dwindling of many aquaculture units.

Of course after these facts there were many serious realignments in the sector. Many units came to other hands after their buying off from the large units of the sector (i.e. Nireus, Selonda, etc.), others joined together in co-operative base (common market) and others reduced their production especially at the Sea Bass.

It is obvious that the bad condition of the Greek producers is not only because of a serie of other subjects which are connected with the ignorant of the rules of the Market and the knowledge about contemporary Marketing, the main of them are :

TIME OF ACTION FOR THE MARKET

The Markets of exterior are activated mainly twice a week (monday morning and wednesday morning). The above days the whole salers receive the products and start their retail sale. It is obvious that the specific days, it is not collected fish only from Greece but also from the whole world, (salmons from Norway, trouts, etc.) from Turkey, Tunisie, Maroc, etc.)

SEASONS OF HIGH AND LOW DEMAND

The market comes strongly to action from the second fourtnight of March until the first fourtnight of August. Especially from September the demand is low until the first fourtnight of December. All the second fourtnight the demand is increased too much especially at the Italian market because of the connoction of these products with the customs of Italy.

The market falls down until the end of the first fourtnight of January. From this period to March the demand saws a serious bending. Of course all the above period, where the demand is high, the price is also higher.

The strange thing is that although the above fluctuation is familiar to the producers, every year from April to June there are no important quantities for sale.

CUSTOMS KNOWLEDGE OF THE PLACE OF DESTINATION OF THE PRODUCTS AND GENERALY OF THE CONSUMERS

Italy: They have replaced the Christmans turkey with Sea Bass and mainly with those of large sizes. Special honour the offer of lunch with fish (Sea Bass) at the weddings and the baptisemes.

United Kindom: Offer of Sea Bream from the Chinese restaurants. They prefer large fish.

U.S.A.: The memorials obtain prestige if during them they serve fish.

Germany & Switzerland: They prefer fish which can be easy cooked (without intestines and bones).

Japan: They prefer every red sea food.

Greece & Spain: They prefer Sea Bream. The Sea Bass is considered (especially in Greece) dirty fish.

France: They prefer large sizes, especially Sea Bass.

RESEARCH OF THE FISH QUALITY SPECIFICATIONS FROM THE CUSTOMERS

It is a fact that the consumers of every place have different way of controlling the fish quality. Most people want the fish to be packed, curved and not straight. The red gills, the clean eyes and the curved packing are samples of freshness.

The black Sea Bream in Patra, Athens and in North Italy is in great demand. It is also better when these have rose cheeks and a cold line in the head. Otherwise in Thessaloniki is in great demand the white Sea Bream.

At the South of Italy is in great demand the small sizes of fish.

Finally the way of packing and cropping of the products contributes excessively at the product quality and freshness. Boxes of polyester of 10 kg or 5 kg depending on the preferences, the way of killing with ice, the quick packing and conservation fast processing of the product to 0-1°C the cover of the fish with nylon before the ice and their transportation in special lorries to keep them cold, are necessary rules for high quality and freshness. It is also very important to keep them without food for 2-3 days before the cropping and mainly stop using antibiotics for 2 at least months before the consume.

OTHER QUALITY STANDARDS

Besides the product quality (trading sizes), basic factors for the acquirement of the above quality standards are :

- a. The quality of juveniles. Healthy juvenile rapidly developed (we choose the stronger members)
- b. The way of feeding and the kind of food
- c. The sanitation of the fish, their appearance (scratches, wounds) but also inside (white livers)

- d. The quantity of fat, the colour of their flesh and their taste (taste fish, the smell of the sea, fish stiff or soft depending on the tastes)

TRADING SIZES PER COUNTRY, PER AREA OF CUSTOMERS

The main tradind sizes for Sea Bass and Sea Bream are :

Piccolo	100 - 200 gr
Small	200 - 300 gr
Normal	300 - 450 gr
Extra	450 - 600 gr
Extra Large	600 - 800 gr
Super	800 -1.000 gr
Extra Super	1.000 - over

France, Spain, U.K. and Switzerland

They prefer large fish (extra - extra large)

North Italy

Great consumption of normal, extra and super

South Italy

70% small
20% piccolo
10% normal

Greece

They prefer normal and extra. Lately the super markets are interested in small sizes, because although they buy in different price, mixing them up with small, they earn big average price.

Germany

They prefer normal and extra. The restaurants generally prefer many times the small sizes because in this way the customer is tricked by the quantity of the fish. The luxurius restaurants prefer larges sizes.

Of course after many years and as the standard of living increases the demand of large sizes is bigger.

VARIETY OF PRODUCTS AND SIZES

The expansion of the market and the consume of great quantities presuppose:

- Variety of kinds (Sea Bass, Sea Bream...)
- Variety of sizes
- Variety of packing

Many times the large fish is the crow for the consume of large quantities or of undesirable sizes. Also the high demand and the luck of some kinds (fish of 1-3 kg or mullet for the Super Market) they increase totally the average price of sale of the whole shipment.

Frequently we sell consiously some special sizes or kinds in the market in satisfying prices but indirectly we blackmail for the consume of quantities with anelastic demand. Other times we sell kinds with damage asking for sale of these kinds with great profits.

DESIRABLE SERVICE. PREPARATION OF PRODUCTION. TRADING. STANDARDIZATION OF PRODUCTS

The producer of fresh fish must always be ready for war. It means that he must have a programme for his production in a way so that he will be able to have product for all the days of the year. It is necessary to have always prepared fish (for two days without food) which will be ready for cropping. Also the selection between small normal and large must be right so that the customer will be satisfied.

The service must always go to the customer's door.

The boxes - if it is possible - must be packed in pallet so the transportation will be easier. On every box must be clear:

- the kind of fish (sea bass - sea bream)
- the size (small - extra)
- the total of kilos
- the number of pieces
- the date of cropping
- the code of proccesing plant of E.E.
- the temperature of the box and the cropping
- the firm of the company

STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE CUSTOMERS

It is necessary for the sales development the contact and the exchange of visits (customer, supplier). The common meetings will help both parts to understand the problem which is created from the one or the other and it will be able to find common ways for a solution. Also the creation of friendly and familiar bonds (invitations for

vacations, presents at the name day, etc.) makes stronger the relationship between the producer and the trader.

PRESERVATION OF CONTRACTS

Regarding the fresh products, it is not possible to have a contract with fixed prices. In a very short time this contract will end up, against one or the other part. It is however, absolutely necessary to keep the rest of the deals, those who have to do with the quantities per year/week, the sizes, the average weight and prices. The prices must be agreed every now and then and if possible to keep them stable minimum for two months and not to change them every week.

Corresponding, the producers also must demand the keeping of the agreement from the mercants and especially the payment, claims e.t.c. Thus, before the beginning of any cooperation, it is necessary the check of the credibility of the customer from a bank or from a research company.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE COMPETITION

The participation of the producer to international exhibitions it is necessary for his publicity and also for the knowledge of the competitors in Greece and in the Exterior.

It is very important to know basic details as :

- productions
- yearly division
- invoice and credit policy
- way of delivery of the products
- trading sizes
- kinds of packing
- general appearance of the product.

PREVALENT TENDENCIES OF THE CONSUMERS. NEW BUYING INTERESTS

We must have seriously in mind the messages and the tensions of the Market. These are summarized in :

- To a universal turn to natural products. Products in great demand as far as they came from the nature and in which we do not interfere during their production or their process using chemical products.
- To the new consumer model. There is a great demand for fresh products, without fat and without any difficulty to use (especially for the housewife who also works), fish without bones, gills, etc. So it is necessary to find suggestions, such as recipes for an easy, tasty and healthy cooking of the product.

Having in mind all the elements we mentioned before, as a dynamical export sector through F.G.M. (Federation of Greek Maricultures) to try for strategic movements.

- a) The creation of studies for all the countries in the European Union and the conditions under which the sales of our products will be according the customs of these countries.
- b) Study for the possibilities to enter our products in the countries of the East Europe Countries.
- c) Creation of a commission which will be in continuous co-operation with the Export Promotion Organization (O.P.E.) with aim the publicity of our products in the countries which will be chosen.
- d) Co-operation with unius in the countries of the European Union.
- e) Organization of meetings with presentation of the different ways of cooking our products in the countries of the European Union.

Finally my opinion is that the development and the expansion of the market of the products in this sector is supported by different strategical movements and the publicity which is necessary to be done but also is supported to the quality standards which, we - the aquacultures - must keep so that we can be reliable for the quality and delivery of our products.