

Hong Kong Dried Fish Market

Prepared by

Shawneen A. Conover and Yuan-fang Dong
The North Pacific Fisheries Program
University of Alaska Anchorage

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Alaska Food Group

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Forward

The dried fish sector of the Hong Kong market is very crowded, filled with many competitors. Market entry costs are high due to limited shelf space, high inventory costs, and other operating costs. To succeed, flexibility, aggressive marketing, and promotion of competitively priced products are needed.

Hong Kong is a modern city where, other than shark fin, abalone, sea cucumbers, fish bladders, and seasoned snacks, the traditional dried fish products are almost nonexistent. This market, dominated by high valued products, though smaller than other Asian dried fish markets is both efficient and stable. These various dried products including seaweed, mussels, scallops and squid have good market potential in Hong Kong.

Many of Hong Kong's import companies, the main distributors of seafood, re-export to China and other Asian countries. These companies have long established ties, particularly with China. They are experienced with the different trading procedures and can often import to these countries duty-free or at reduced tariffs. Establishing relations with these companies can greatly enhance a product's market access to other Asian countries.

Above all, companies new to the Hong Kong market must have patience and enough money to wait out the market entry process. Like most Asian countries, commercial trade is often based on long-term relationships where the customer can depend on reliable service and quality products.

Shawneen A. Conover, Principal Investigator
Program Manager
North Pacific Fisheries Program
Yuan-fang Dong, Research Associate
Program Assistant
North Pacific Fisheries Program

I. Introduction

British rule over Hong Kong ended July 1, 1997 when the People's Republic of China regained its sovereignty lost 156 years ago. Under the terms of the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration, Hong Kong SAR (Special Administrative Region) continues to operate as it had under British rule. A visit to Hong Kong SAR, or participation in any business transaction with Hong Kong SAR business entities, will show that the only visible changes that can be detected are the hanging of mainland China's flag and the face (not the valuation) of the Hong Kong dollar. Its transition to Chinese rule has been smooth and almost unnoticeable.

Hong Kong has always been a part of China. Even under British rule, its population of more than six million, crowded into an area of 400 square miles, is 98 percent Chinese. For more than 125 years it has been the main gateway for trade with Mainland China. Today it is a modern, international financial and trade center with a highly educated work force. Many Western businesses prefer to conduct trade with China via Hong Kong for these reasons, relying on Hong Kong's experience and strong contacts with the mainland.

II. General Overview of Hong Kong SAR's Dried Fish Industry

A. History

Seafood consumption is very high in Hong Kong. Like most Pacific Rim countries, fish and seafood products have been a traditional part of the population's diet for thousands of years. While Hong Kong's seafood market is an important part of its life style and trade, the dried fish industry is not a major economic concern. This is mainly due to the people's preference for live or fresh fish, which is abundant and available at relatively low prices.

B. Products

Species	Dried Product Form	Supply Source
Anchovy	whole	various
Abalone	whole half shell or shelled, sliced	New Zealand, Australia, Middle East-Oman, Japan, South Africa
Clams	whole, shelled	various
Cuttlefish	whole, sliced	Japan, China
Eel bladders (maws)	whole	various
Fish bladders	whole	Africa
Fish skins	bits and pieces, salty	various
Hake	butterflied, fillets	various
Jellyfish	shredded	various
Jewfish (croaker)	salted, fillets	Bangladesh, Indonesia,

Mussels	whole, half shell and shelled	Vietnam, Malaysia
Needlefish (golden & silver)	whole	New Zealand
Octopus	whole (small-sized)	China, Japan
Oysters	whole	China
Salmon	jerky	various
Scallops	whole, broken	Taiwan
Sea Cucumbers	whole	US, Australia, China
		Indonesia, Japan,
		Malaysia, Australia,
		Africa
Seaweed	pressed sheets, shredded	various
Shark fins	whole, skinned, cartilage removed	South America, Indone
		sia, Northern China,
		Japan, Malaysia,
		Australia, Europe,
		Norway and Africa
Shrimp	whole, head-on, broken, shell-on and peeled	Vietnam,
		Thailand, China
Squid	whole, shredded	China, Argentina



1. Product Forms

Shark fins, bladders, scallops, shrimp, mussels and sea cucumbers, some of the most popular products, are washed and sun dried, and sold whole. Abalone is sold whole or thinly sliced. Shrimp and scallops are also sold in bits and pieces (broken).

Product forms of dried fish, though not common in Hong Kong, include whole, skinless headed and gutted, butterflied and fillets. The popular dried fish snack varieties (seasoned and unseasoned) include small whole fish, fillets, shredded, flaked, and fish bones and skins. The snack varieties come in a variety of flavors: curry, sweet (sugar, honey, vanilla, etc.), salt, spicy (varying degrees of hot), ginger, soy sauce, flavored with liquor, and mixed with sesame seeds.

Seaweed is dried and sold in its natural state, pressed into sheets or shredded.

Both dried fish products and snack varieties are also used for seasoning and cooking and have a six-month shelf life. Depending on the type of storage; e.g., cool, dark or refrigerated, the products' shelf life can be extended considerably and still maintain optimum flavor and texture.

2. Product Characteristics

Species: In a market where shark fins, bladders, sea cucumbers and abalone make up most of the market, the specie used is still considered important but not as critical as in other Asian countries.

Region of Origin: For products such as bladders and shark fins the region of origin is not important. For other dried products, the region of origin is very important because the salt content of the product will vary with regions. Some countries are known for the superior quality products. They say that the best sea cucumbers are from Japan and command the highest prices. Abalone from Japan, the Middle East and South Africa receive the highest prices, known for their large, uniform size.

Color: Generally speaking, the lighter the color the higher the quality. This does not pertain to products such as sea cucumbers.

Price: The most popular products on the Hong Kong market are also the highest-valued dried fish products. With heavy competition and limited shelf space, price is always going to be a sensitive issue. The same will hold true with snack-style dried products and the smaller market shares of dried fish used for cooking traditional dishes. Also, western dried fish processors should keep in mind the close proximity of the Asian countries that offer an abundant supply of inexpensive fish.

Smell, taste, texture, and weight: The most popular products, shark fins, bladders, and sea cucumber, have no taste or smell. It is up to the restaurants and households that use these products to make the prepared dish taste good. Prepared snacks will take on the smell and taste of the flavoring used to produce the product. The moisture content determines texture and weight. Most products should have a 5 percent moisture content. Excessive moisture levels in the product will result in lower prices and can lead to spoilage.

Size: The larger the size and thicker the product, the higher the price will be for most products. Restaurants will always try to obtain the largest sized products. However, there is a market, a much larger market, for the smaller sized, less expensive products - the households. For bladders, the size of the opening aperture is important. To command the highest possible price, the aperture should be at its maximum.

Packaging: Products sold in bulk do not require packaging. Any products intended for the retail level should be packaged in a way that will attract the consumers eye in heavily crowded shelves (see Section VIII, a. Packaging and Promotion).

Shark's fin and scallops displayed in a dried seafood store in Hong Kong



Scallops displayed in a dried seafood store in Hong Kong



Abalone displayed in a dried seafood store in Hong Kong



III. Consumption Trends

Hong Kong has a population of 6.5 million (end 1997 est., Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department), of which 98 percent is ethnic Chinese. It is a relatively young, increasingly affluent population with 71.5 percent aged 15-64 years. More than 50 percent of this population is in the age range of 15-40 years and only 10 percent are 65 years and older. Traditional tastes are influenced by the Chinese diet, but preferences are now leaning toward more convenient foods that require less preparation time.

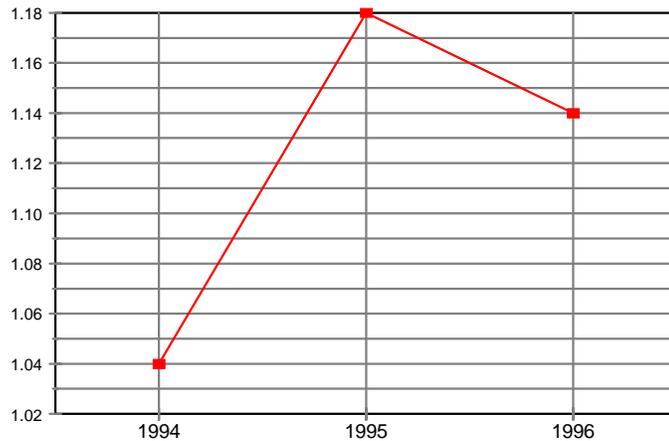
A. Influences on Consumption

Hong Kong consumers consume very little dried fish, preferring live or fresh fish that they purchase mainly at wet markets. Fresh or live fish is abundant and relatively inexpensive due to the low labor cost and closeness of the Asian countries that are the main suppliers for the domestic market.

The convenience of the fresh or live fish, coupled with the consumer's perception that fresh is better, influences consumers to purchase fewer dried fish products particularly during prime fishing seasons and holidays. According to several Hong Kong companies interviewed, some say the dried fish market is shrinking with fewer people eating salted/dried fish because they believe it causes cancer.

However, most companies believe the demand for dried fish may be slightly increasing, but the change is slow. The increase in consumption is occurring in the high end, quality products such as shark fin, sea cucumber, abalone, bladders, and snack-style products. Except for shark fins, in the last five years there has not been any significant change in demand or introduction of new products.

HK Dried Fish Per Capita Consumption
in kilograms



B. Consumer Acceptance

Typical Hong Kong consumers are slow to change their traditional habits. A foreign company cannot expect to educate Hong Kong consumers through heavy promotion and expect them to change. The elderly, especially, will not change. Some companies cited smoked fish as a product that has failed to gain acceptance on the Hong Kong market. Products must be tailored to meet the Hong Kong consumers' tastes.

Large western-style supermarkets that offer a variety of convenient food are becoming very popular in Hong Kong. With these types of foods, consumers are becoming very brand conscious, attracted by packaging, price, and quality. Snack-style dried fish products can be found in supermarkets, fast-food stores, and small dried foodstuff stores, where taste-test samples are generally available for most products.

IV. Traditional Use

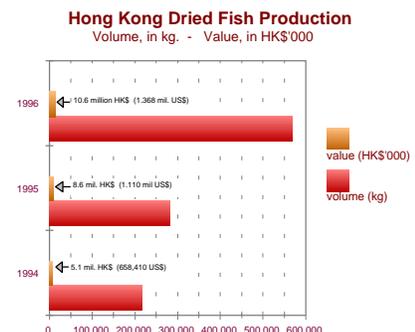
Dried shark fins and bladders, high valued products, are often consumed in soups in both fine Chinese restaurants and households. Sea cucumbers, also considered a high valued product, are reconstituted by steaming or boiling then used in a variety of ways, including stir fry dishes and stuffed with meat or fish and vegetables. Salted fish is consumed with rice. Snacks are consumed primarily by the younger generation.

Generally, it is the older generation with lower incomes that consume the limited amount of traditional dried fish.

V. Dried Fish Supply

A. Production

Hong Kong's small domestic fishery is heavily dependent on imports to satisfy the increasing demand for seafood. Therefore, production of fish products, particularly dried fish products, is relatively low - less than 5 percent of its total market supply. Production does fluctuate, depending on the level of raw imports brought in for reprocessing.

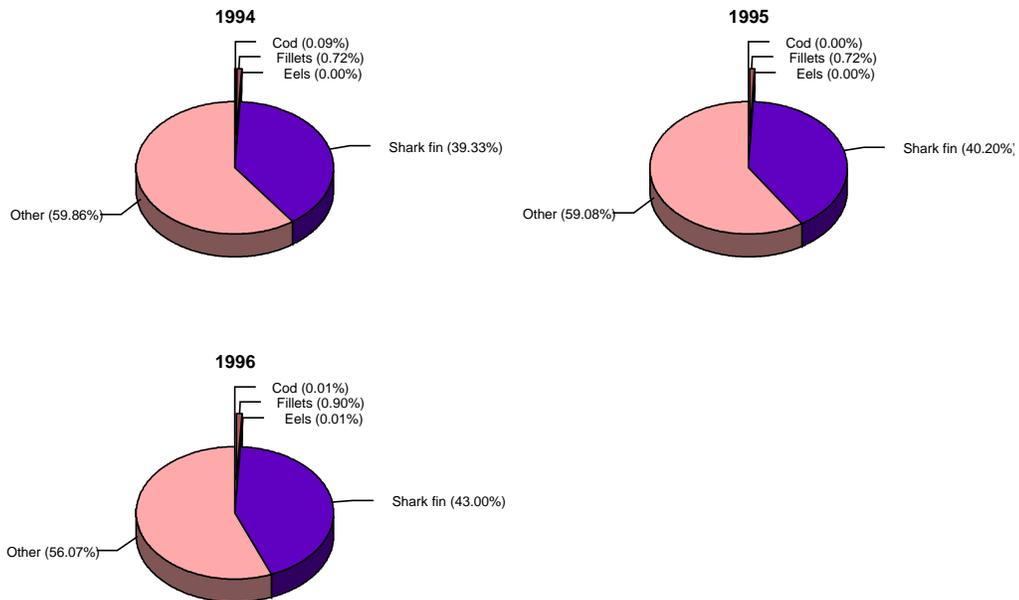


B. Imports

More than half of Hong Kong's imports of dried fish products are directly re-exported. Imports that stay on the market are mainly shark fins, bladders, sea cucumbers, and seasoned snacks. Shark fin, by far, is Hong Kong's most important import accounting for more than 40 percent of the total volume and 77 percent of the total value. Hong Kong's other popular dried fish products, bladders, sea cucumbers, abalone and snacks, are grouped in the "other dried fish" category of Hong Kong's harmonized system for coding products. The category represents close to 60 percent of the total imported volume but only more than 20 percent of the total value.

Hong Kong has many trading partners for its imports, but only five countries have shares of 5 percent or more of its market. China, the largest trading partner in imports, accounts for 25.6 percent of the volume and 21 percent of the total value. Most of the imports from China are shark fin that has been sources from many countries and sent to China for processing. In China the raw product is skinned, trimmed, and then sun dried. Many of these plants in China are owned or heavily invested in by Hong Kong companies.

Hong Kong Dried Fish Imports Volume, by Product

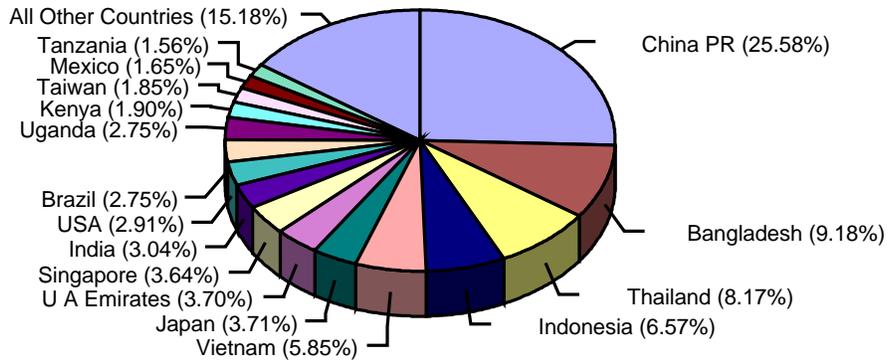


HS Codes	Description
	Dried Fish, whether or not salted, but not smoked
0305 5100	Cod, dried but not smoked
0305 5300	Fillets, dried/salted or in brine but not smoked
0305 5910	Eels
0305 5920	Shark's fins
0305 5990	Other

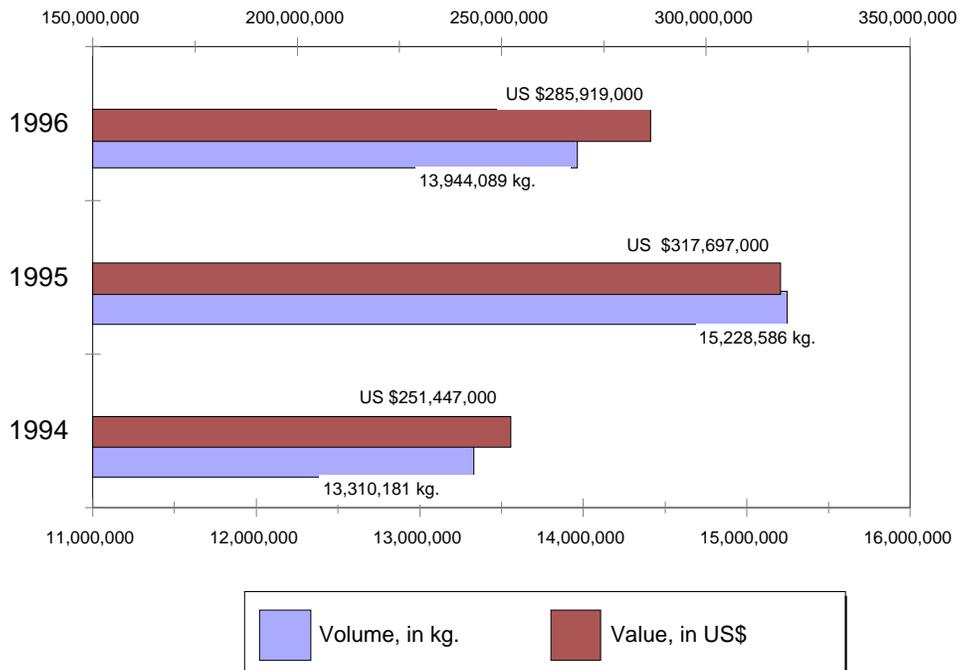
Hong Kong Dried Fish Imports

Volume, by Trading Partners

1996



Hong Kong Dried Fish Imports



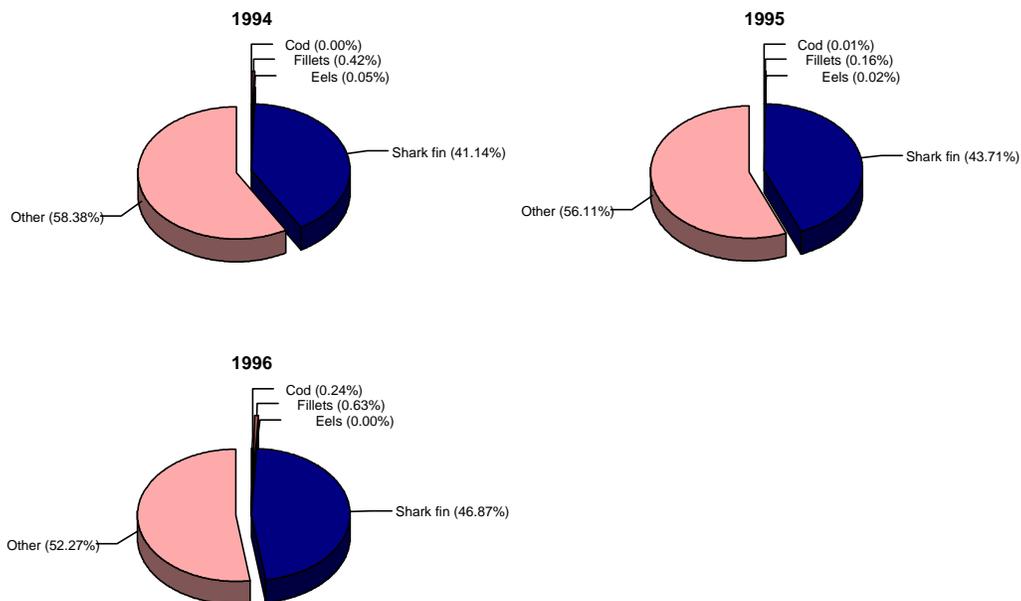
C. Exports

1. Domestic Exports

Domestic exports represent a rather insignificant amount, slightly more than 1 percent of Hong Kong's total exports. Domestic exports, consisting almost entirely of shark fins and "other dried fish", has declined from 217,986 kg. in 1994 to 97,740 kg. in 1996. The volume of shark fins processed or packaged and exported from Hong Kong has declined over this period by nearly 60 percent and its average price has also declined by 52 percent. Hong Kong companies claim this drop in the shark fin market is a result of more of the product staying in mainland China after processing. While exports of "other dried fish" also fell, its average price increased slightly over the period.

Hong Kong Dried Fish Domestic Exports

Volume, by Product Code



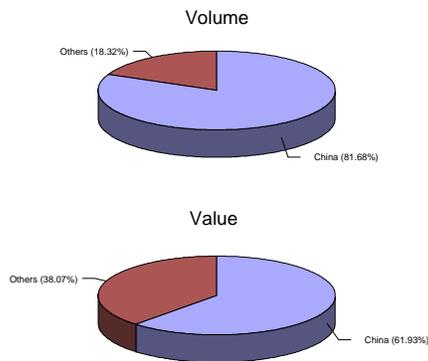
HS Codes	Description
	Dried Fish, whether or not salted, but not smoked
0305 5100	Cod, dried but not smkd
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0305 5910	Eels
0305 5920	Shark's fins
0305 5990	Other

2. Re-exports

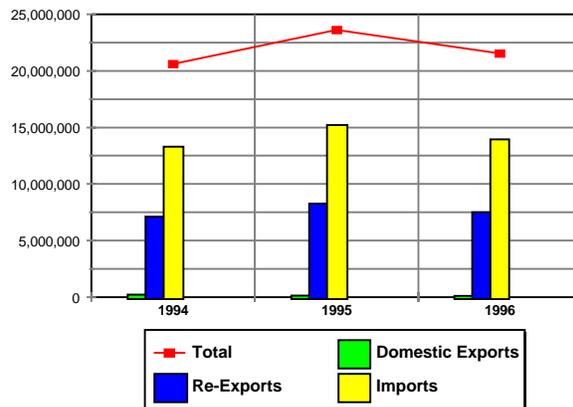
Source: Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong

Re-exports, where no value has been added to the product while in the country, are a major part of Hong Kong's total trade. Because of Hong Kong's position as a major global trading center, its re-exports make up nearly all (97-99 percent) of its total exports in both volume and value. Shark fins, the most important product in the re-export category, accounted for 47 percent of the volume and 72 percent of the value of the total re-exports. Next, other dried fish category (0305-5990) accounted for 52 percent of the volume and 27 percent of the value. Other re-exports, dried cod and fillets each accounted for less than 1 percent of the volume and value.

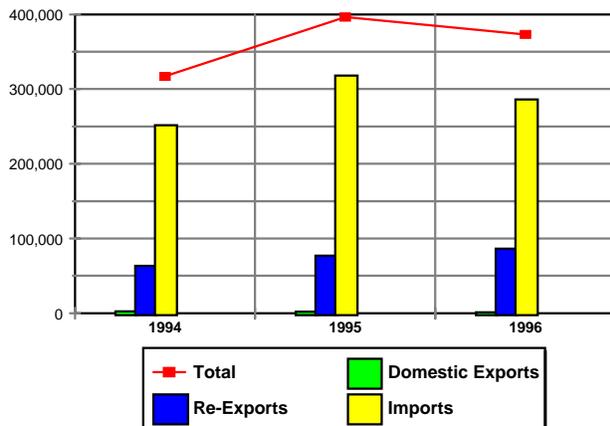
Hong Kong Dried Fish Re-Exports
1996 Trade



Hong Kong Total Dried Fish Trade
Volume, in kilograms



Hong Kong Total Dried Fish Trade
Value, in '000 US Dollars

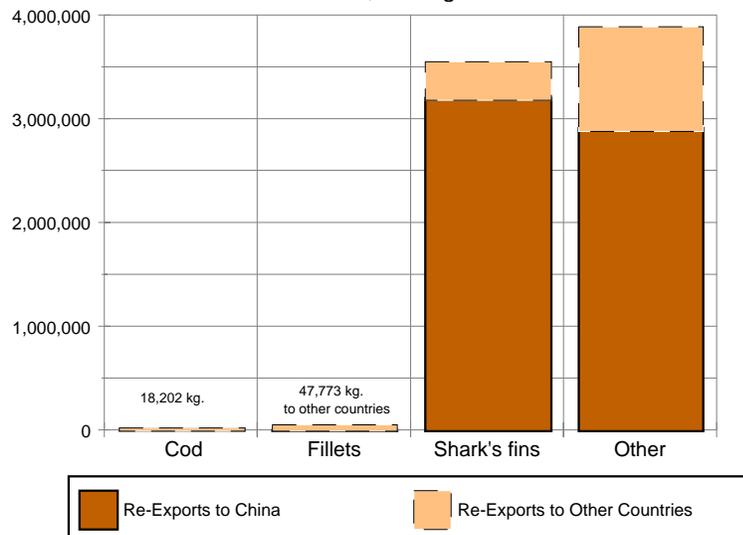


Of Hong Kong's total 1996 re-exports, products sent to mainland China accounted for 82 percent of the volume and 62 percent of the value. A total of 18,202 kg. of dried cod valued at US\$34,470 and virtually all re-exports of dried cod were sent to China (47,773 kg. of fillets valued at US\$647,049 were sent to countries other than China). 3.197 mil. kg. of shark fin valued at US\$40,133,118, 90 percent of the volume and 64 percent of the value of total shark fin re-exports, were sent to China. 2.910 mil. kg. of other dried fish valued at US\$13,390,261, 75 percent of the volume and 58 percent of the value of total other dried fish re-exports, were sent to China.

In 1996, dried fish re-exports to China alone originated from 40 different trading partners before transferring through Hong Kong. For these re-exports the major countries of origin were, in volume, Japan with 23.9 percent, Indonesia with 18.7 percent, India 9.1 percent, United Arab Emirates 8.3 percent, Tanzania 7.4 percent and Brazil 7.1 percent; in value, Japan 22.8 percent, Indonesia 22.5 percent, Thailand 12.4 percent, Tanzania 8 percent, Brazil 7.8 percent and India 5.1 percent.

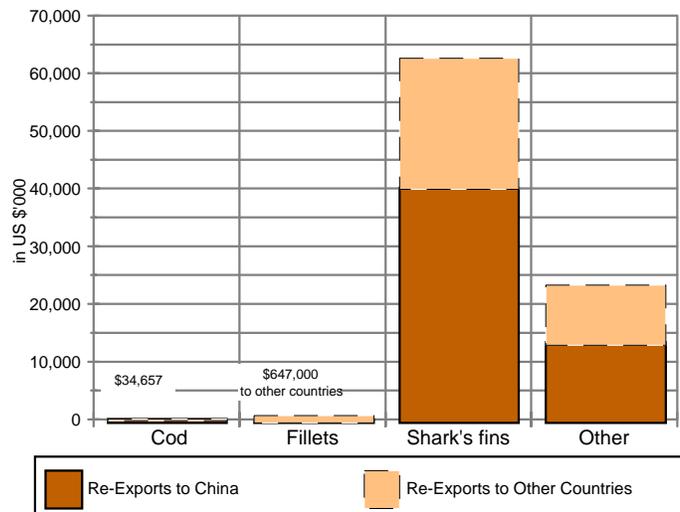
Hong Kong Dried Fish Re-Exports

Volume, in kilograms



Hong Kong Dried Fish Re-Exports

Value, in US \$'000s

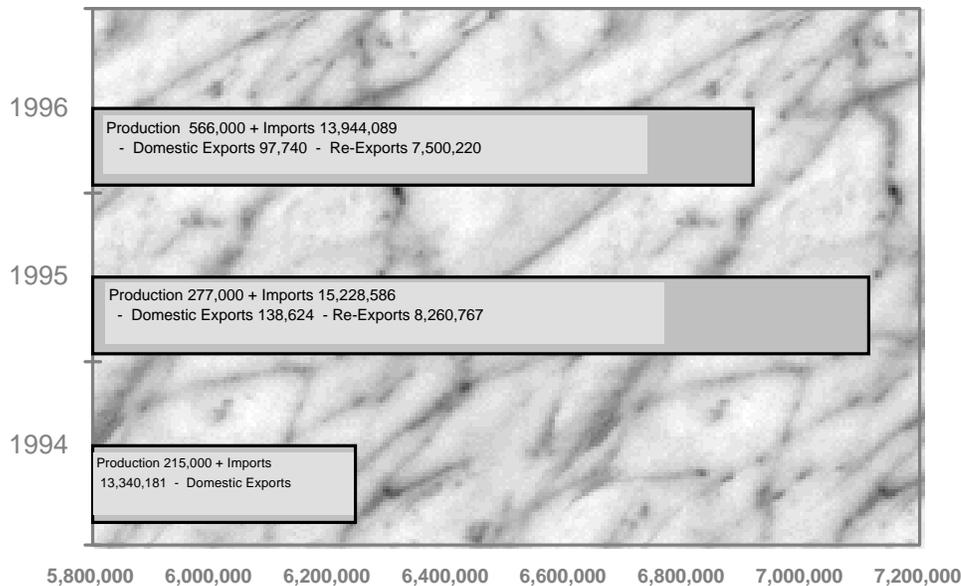


D. Domestic Market Supply

Hong Kong's domestic dried fish market is dominated by product in the "other" category (60 percent) and shark fin (38 percent). As noted previously, "other" dried fish includes bladders, seasoned snacks, sea cucumbers and any other dried fish product not specified elsewhere (i.e., cod, fillets and eels).

HK Domestic Dried Fish Market Supply

in kilograms



VI. Marketing and Distribution Channels

The Fish Marketing Organization was first established in 1945 to provide for orderly and efficient marketing, a reliable supply and reasonable prices of marine fish. The Marine Fish (Marketing) Ordinance, Chapter 291 of the Laws of Hong Kong, provide the Fish Marketing Organization with the legal framework to oversee landings, wholesale marketing, and external trade of marine fish. The Fish Marketing Organization also establishes, regulates, and operate wholesale fish markets, collection points, and related establishments. As their main source of revenue, the organization receives a 7 percent commission on market sales. At the present, there are no wholesale dried fish markets in Hong Kong because the demand does not warrant it. Dried fish products may be found at the local wholesale fish markets, retail shops, and supermarkets.

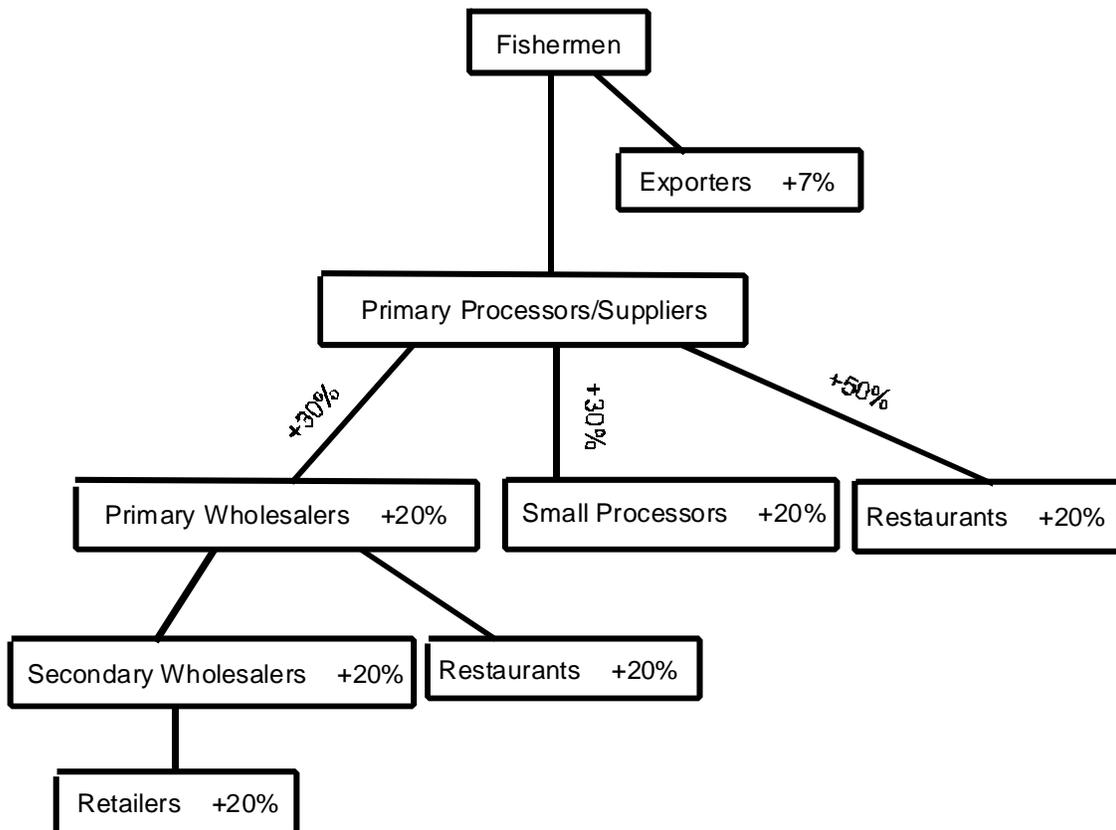
The Fish Marketing Organization operates seven wholesale fish markets at Aberdeen, Castel Peak, Cheung Sha Wan, Kwun Tong, Sai Kung, Shau Kei Wan, and Tai Po, and one collection point at Cheung Chau.

VII. Pricing

Hong Kong is a very crowded, competitive market. Companies must be flexible in pricing their products in order to move merchandise fast. Surplus products are usually sold at auctions held daily 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. in the local markets. The auctions help to stabilize the price and relieve processors of excess supply. The market deducts commissions from the selling price. Market price will vary with demand but remains fairly stable.

Except for shark fins whose price has doubled over the last five years, dried fish prices have remained relatively stable. The shark fin market peaked, in both value and volume, two years ago. The price of shark fins increased rapidly about five years ago when China first entered the market but has since stabilized. Some prices for other products will fluctuate with the fishing seasons; e.g., the season for squid runs March through August, during this time the supply is good so prices are lower. See Appendix D: Prices for Hong Kong Dried Fish Products.

Pricing Mark-up Example



VIII. Trade Business Practices

A. Business Transactions, Tariffs and Customs Procedures

Hong Kong SAR remains a free port, with no tariffs on any seafood imports. Getting your product to Hong Kong is not a problem, however, breaking into the closely controlled, competitive market may prove challenging. The usual documents required for trade with Hong Kong are a commercial invoice, a bill of lading (or airway bill) and a packing list. All weights and measurements of products must be stated in metric units. A U.S. Shipper's Export Declaration is required if the value is more than \$2,500 (\$500 for U.S. postal shipments).

B. Packaging and Promotion

Hong Kong's Merchandise Marks Ordinance requires accurate, complete descriptions on all trade products to include quantity, count or weight, origin, ingredients, trademarks, shelf life, expiration date, special storage conditions, manufacturer's full name, and address, etc. Labels printed in English or Chinese are acceptable, but many product labels are printed in both English and Chinese.

Aggressive marketing and promotion of a product are major keys in entering and maintaining a share of the Hong Kong market. As a large international trading center, products are very competitive and price sensitive. Foreign products are more successful when heavily promoted through international exhibitions, television, and newspapers, in both English and Chinese (Cantonese). Direct marketing by foreign companies has not been a very successful method of promoting products, but Hong Kong has many advertising agencies that cater to promoting international trade. See Appendix I: General Contacts for who to contact for referrals.

APPENDIX A:

Hong Kong Dried Fishery Products Consumption and Domestic Supply

	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>
Consumption (MT)	6,277	7,328	7,169
Value (in HK\$mil)	1,440	1,889	1,562
Value (in US\$mil)	186	244	202
Per Capita Consumption (kg.)	1.04	1.18	1.14

Source: 1996 estimated by Agriculture & Fisheries Department

(in kilograms)	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>
Production	215,000	277,000	566,000
Imports	13,340,181	15,228,586	13,944,089
Domestic Exports	217,986	138,624	97,740
Re-exports	7,095,110	8,260,767	7,500,220
Domestic Supply	6,242,085	7,106,195	6,912,129

Source: Agriculture and Fisheries Department, Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong

APPENDIX B: Dried Fish Products Imports, by Product

HONG KONG - DRIED FISH IMPORTS: (in kilos and 000's HK\$)								
	1994	1994	1994	1995	1995	1995	1996	1996
	Quantity	Value	avg. Price	Quantity	Value	avg. Price	Quantity	Value
Dried Fish, whether or not salted, but not smoked								
0305 5100 Cod, dried but not smkd	11,483	491	HK\$42.76	448	76	HK\$169.64	2,050	1
0305 5300 Fillets, dried/salted or in brine but not smoked	95,260	4,444	HK\$46.65	109,021	5,940	HK\$54.48	124,863	7,6
0305 5910 Eels	0	0	0	4	2	HK\$500.00	2,000	
0305 5920 Shark's fins	5,235,469	1,478,964	HK\$282.49	6,121,896	1,923,369	HK\$314.18	5,996,339	1,710,2
0305 5990 Other	7,967,969	463,795	HK\$58.21	8,997,217	531,475	HK\$59.07	7,818,837	496,6
Totals - HONG KONG \$'000s	13,310,181	1,947,694		15,228,586	2,460,862		13,944,089	2,214,7
Totals - U.S. \$'000s		251,447			317,697			285,9

Source: Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong

APPENDIX C: Dried Fish Exports

Domestic Exports, by Product

HONG KONG - DRIED FISH EXPORTS:								
(in kilos and 000's HK\$)								
	1994	1995	1994	1995	1995	1995	1996	1996
	Quantity	Value	avg. Price	Quantity	Value	avg. Price	Quantity	Value
Dried Fish, whether or not salted, but not smoked								
0305 5100 Cod, dried but not smkd	0	0		0	0		0	0
0305 5300 Fillets, dried/salted or in brine but not smoked	409	76	HK\$185.82	0	0		0	0
0305 5910 Eels	0	0		0	0		0	0
0305 5920 Shark's fins	29,903	8,750	HK\$292.61	28,970	8,702	HK\$300.38	12,422	1,745
0305 5990 Other	187,674	11,376	HK\$60.62	109,654	7,327	HK\$66.82	85,318	5,293
Totals Hong Kong\$'000s	217,986	20,202		138,624	16,029		97,740	7,038
Totals US\$'000s	217,986	2,608		138,624	2,069		97,740	909

Source: Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong

APPENDIXD: PRICES

Hong Kong Dried Fishery Products

Average Wholesale Price: (in HK\$ and US\$/kg)	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>
salted/dried marine fish	HK\$29.40 / US\$3.80	HK\$42.44 / US\$5.48	HK\$ 34.74 / US\$ 4.48
salted/dried invertebrates			HK\$113.78 / US\$14.69

Source: 1996 estimated by Agriculture & Fisheries Department

Dried Products Wholesale Prices at Hai Sang Hong Marine Foodstuffs Ltd., Hong Kong (5-Star Restaurant Quality Products) October 8, 1997

Item	HK\$/kg.	US\$/kg.	Item	HK\$/kg.	US\$/kg.
Abalone			Scallops		
(size- 6pc./500g.)	\$22,000	\$2,840	extra large	\$680	\$ 88
(size- 8pc./500g.)	19,200	2,479	large	\$560	72
(large, from Japan)	14,800	1,911	medium	\$460	59
(medium, from Japan)	9,800	1,265	small	\$380	49
(size-25 pc./500g.)	7,300	942	broken	\$320	41
(size- 28 pc/500g.)		6,800	Shark fin, Golden Mountain Hook		
(size-40 pc /500 g.)	4,380	878	xx. large	\$1,900	\$245
(size-60pc/500g.,		565	ex. large	\$1,780	230
from Middle East)	2,800	361	large	\$1,580	204
(small from Middle East)	2,400	310	medium	\$1,480	191
from South Africa	2,200	284	small	\$1,150	148
Fish bladder					
Large	980	127			
Medium	930	120			
Small	880	114			
Small	780	101			

APPENDIX E: Major Producers

Manufacturers of Dried Fish

Fook Cheung Hing Company

Address: 31-33 First Street
Ground Floor
Sai Ying Pun
Hong Kong
Tel: 852-2540-0537
Fax: 852-2559-0265
Contact: Juliana Wong, Sales Manager

Manufacturers of Preserved Fish

Hang Fat Hong Provision MFY Ltd.

Address: Kingsford Industrial Building
Block 2 &th Floor Flat E
26-32 Kwai Hei Street
Kwai Chung, New Territories
Hong Kong
Tel: 852-2614-4588
Fax: 852-2614-3129
Contact: Wong Tat, Director

Grand Plan Enterprise Limited

Address: Mon Hing Factory Building
7th Floor Flat B
20 Catchick Street, Kennedy Town
Hong Kong
Tel: 852-2818-5761
Fax: 852-2855-1597
Contact: Shek Chun Fung, Manager

Fook Cheung Hing Company

Address: 31-33 First Street
Ground Floor
Sai Ying Pun
Hong Kong
Tel: 852-2540-0537

Fax: 852-2559-0265
Contact: Juliana Wong, Sales Manager

Manufacturer of Preserved Fish--with Factory in the Mainland of China

Footsun Group (HK) Co. Ltd.

Address: Winful Center
5th Floor Room 5
30 shing Yip Street
Kwun Tong, Kowloon
Hong Kong
Tel: 852-2797-2203
Fax: 852-2342-6671
Contact: Wong Kam Wan, General Manager

Triple Power Food Products Company

Address: Seabright Plaza
21st Floor Flat C
9-23 Shell Street, North Point
Hong Kong
Tel: 852-2578-0080
Fax: 852-2578-9545
Contact: Jacky Ng, Director

APPENDIX F: Recipes

Stuffed Sea Cucumber

500 g	Reconstituted Sea Cucumber, wash thoroughly
250 g	Chicken Breast, minced
50 g	Pork Fat, minced
50 g	Cooked Chinese Ham, shredded
2	Egg Whites
1 tablespoon	Cooking Wine
4 teaspoon	Salt
½ teaspoon	MSG
1 tablespoon	Green Onion and Ginger Root's Extract
½ teaspoon	White Pepper
2 tablespoon	Cornstarch, dissolve 1 tablespoon in 1 cup of water
2 tablespoon	Cooking Oil
½ cup	Broth
1 teaspoon	Sesame Oil

In a bowl mix together chicken meat, pork fat, cooking wine, 3 teaspoons salt, ¼ teaspoon of MSG, green onion and ginger root extract, egg whites, and 1 tablespoon cornstarch solution and set it aside. In a pot of boiling water, dip the sea cucumber in the pot for 2 seconds, then drain. Next, gently dry the inside of the cucumber with a paper towel, spread small amount of dry cornstarch evenly over the inside, and then stuff it with the chicken meat mixture. While stuffing, put the cooked ham shreds in the center of the sea cucumber. Afterwards, place the stuffed sea cucumber on a plate and steam it over a high heat for 10 minutes, then take the sea cucumber out and slice it into 1.5 cm long pieces, and neatly arrange them in a clean plate. In a wok, heat the cooking oil, add the broth, the remaining cooking wine, salt, MSG and white pepper into the wok. When the broth comes to a boil, add the remaining cornstarch solution. After the broth becomes thick, spread the sesame oil over the top. Pour the sauce on the top of the stuffed sea cucumber and serve.

Abalone and Tofu

250 g	Reconstituted Abalone, sliced thin
500 g	Firm Tofu, cut into 1 x 1 x 0.3 inch chunks
100 g	Cooked Chinese Ham, sliced thin
500 g	Baby Bok Choy, cut into 2 inch long and ½ inch wide
750 g	Chicken Broth
1 tablespoon	Cooking wine
3 tablespoon	Oyster Sauce
2 tablespoon	Cornstarch dissolved in ¼ cup of water
1 tablespoon	Cooking Oil

Place tofu and 500 grams chicken broth in a skillet, cook over high heat until it comes to a boil, then reduce to low heat and simmer for half an hour. Marinate the abalone with the cooking wine for 15 minutes. Dip baby bok choy in a pot of boiling water for one minute and drain. In a large steam-safe bowl, evenly distribute the sliced abalone at the bottom of the bowl, the sliced Chinese ham on top of the abalone, and the bok choy on top of the ham. Finally, add the tofu over the bok choy. Place the bowl into a steamer and steam it over high heat for 20 minutes. Take the bowl out of the steamer and replace it with a large soup bowl by a quick "up side down" switch, so that the abalone is on the top and the tofu on the bottom. Next, in a wok, bring the remaining chicken broth to a boil and stir oyster sauce, cooking oil and cornstarch solution in. When the broth becomes thick, pour it on the top of the abalone and serve.

APPENDIX G: Useful Facts about Hong Kong

Population: 6.5 million as estimated in 1997

Language: Both English and Chinese are officially acceptable, and Cantonese is the primary spoken language used by most Hong Kong residents.

GDP: US \$171.6 billion, with a real growth rate of 5 percent (estimated in 1997)

Currency: The Hong Kong Dollar

The Hong Kong currency is said to be binding with the U.S. dollar. For many years, it has remained at a very stable exchange rate against the U.S. dollar:

1 Hong Kong dollar = 0.1291 U.S. dollar
1 U.S. dollar = 7.7459 Hong Kong dollars

Official Holidays:

<i>New Year's Day</i>	January 1. Official 1-day closure.
<i>Spring Festival</i>	The first three days of a Chinese lunar year, which could fall in mid January to late February of the calendar year. Official 3-day closure
<i>Easter Holiday</i>	Good Friday, the following Saturday and Monday, Official 3-day closure
<i>Ching Ming Festival</i>	April 4. Official 1-day closure.
<i>Dragon Boat Festival</i>	The 5 th day of the 5 th month in a Chinese lunar year, which could fall in June of the calendar year. Official 1-day closure.
<i>Hong Kong SAR Establishment Day</i>	July 1, Official 1-day closure.
<i>Sino-Japan War Victory Day</i>	August 17, Official 1-day closure.
<i>Mid-Autumn Festival</i>	The 15 th day of the 8 th month of a Chinese lunar year, which could fall in September. Official 1-day closure.
<i>National Day</i>	October 1-2. Official 2-day closure.
<i>Cheung Yeung Festival</i>	The 9 th day of the 9 th month in a Chinese lunar year, which could fall in October. Official 1-day closure.
<i>Christmas Holiday</i>	December 25-26. Official 2-day closure.

APPENDIX H: General Contacts

Hong Kong Trade
Department Trade Department Tower
700 Nathan Road
Kowloon, Hong Kong SAR
Tel: (852) 2789-7444
Fax: (852) 2789-2491

Hong Kong Agricultural Trade Office
18th Floor, St. John's Building
33 Garden Road
Hong Kong
Tel: (852) 2841-2350
Fax: (852) 2845-0943

Hong Kong Trade Development Council
38th Floor, Office Tower, convention Plaza
1 Harbour Road
Wanchai, Hong Kong SAR
Tel: (852) 2584-4333
Fax: (852) 2824-0249

Hong Kong Direct Mail and Marketing Association
17th Floor, Time Centre
53-55 Hollywood Road, Central
Hong Kong
Tel: (852) 2850-5829
Fax: (852) 2581-0227

Hong Kong Trade Development Council
673 Fifth Avenue, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10022
U. S. A.
Tel: (212) 838-8688
Fax: (212) 838-8941

Hong Kong Trade Development Council
Los Angeles World Trade Centre
350 South Figueroa Street, Suite #282
Los Angeles, CA 90071-1386
U. S. A.
Tel: (213) 622-3194
Fax: (213) 613-1490

Various Dried Fish Products Found in Hong Kong



1-1 Dried flounder, dried cod strips, and dried shrimp



1-2 Dried squid and flounder.



1-3 Sleeved dried fish; Indian ocean species. Note that the face of the fish is always wrapped when sleeved.



1-4 Hong Kong retail stall selling dried abalone and fish bladders.
Price is always dependent on quality and size.



1-5 Dried skate wings,
very small sized.