

Coronavirus response

EUMOFA's weekly data and trends analysis

Week 15

The fishery and aquaculture sectors are among the most immediately impacted by the crisis. EUMOFA is releasing a weekly COVID-19 bulletin in order to inform the sector as quickly as possible on the evolution of the markets along the entire value chain, based on the most recent data on first sales, production and trade of fishery and aquaculture products. The data and analyses proposed are accurate to EUMOFA experts' best knowledge but are of course subject to availability of information in the short-term and to intrinsic volatility of the current situation.

Easter Holidays

First-sale and trade data for week 14 and 15 of 2020 are influenced by the Easter holidays. In countries regarded as suppliers, supply may vary based on public holidays length and on the segments suppliers are selling to. Furthermore, each year Easter holidays occur in a different week and the length of public holidays varies across countries. So, comparisons of weekly data, both week-over-week and year-over-year, should be handled with care.



FISHERIES

STILL LOW VOLUMES BUT SOME SIGNS OF PRICE IMPROVEMENTS DURING EASTER¹

In week 15, available first-sales data for a handful of EU Member States shows increase in first-sales prices for several groundfish and flatfish species. The increase in first-sales prices can be due to increase in demand for the Easter holidays. However, it should be noted that volumes sold at first-sale stage were in general low, and at local level some species still suffered marked decline in prices.

In **Spain**, at the end of week 15, CEPESCA and FEDEPESCA report that more than 50% of fisheries and almost 100% of distribution are still active. [Prices at first sale, although volatile, are recovering.](#)

In **France**, fishing activity and landing volumes are still low, but some smaller auctions have reopened yet with limited activity. [FranceAgriMer data on weekly auction sales](#) (excluding the Mediterranean) show that, compared with week 14, volume were stable (+2%, mostly due to a strong increase of scallop volumes) and average prices slightly increased (+9%). Trends vary a lot across species.

¹ Weekly data on first sale are conceived to be disseminated as rapidly as possible. For this reason, they only cover some representative products in a selection of locations in some countries. They do not aim to give complete coverage of the market, and so it is recommended to use them as a mere indication of ongoing trends. For more information on species, countries and locations covered, please see [here](#).

In five [Danish auctions](#) (Hansthalm, Hirtshals, Strandby, Grenaa and Skagen), daily average volumes were slightly higher over the three working days in week 15 compared to the five days in week 14. Prices showed an increasing trend in week 15, with large variations across species.



AQUACULTURE

PRODUCTION CONTINUES BUT SALES AND LIQUIDITY ARE STILL A CHALLENGE

The [aquafeed producer BioMar](#) states that the measures taken across Europe to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 have had no negative consequences on feed production and deliveries from their production facilities in Greece, Spain, France, Denmark (and Turkey).

For eel farmers in the Netherlands, sales have dropped by nearly 40% or even more for some farmers since the COVID-19 outbreak. Traditionally, around 50% of eel sales is to the HoReCa segment. The steep drop in income may impact farmers ability to build up livestock for future harvest².

COVID-19 has hit the Greek seabass and seabream farming industry hard. Sales have decreased by 40% since the COVID-19 outbreak, while companies more heavily exposed to the foodservice industry report [declines by 60% to 90%](#). Lack of liquidity is becoming more and more intense, due to sales reduction and requests for extension of payments from wholesalers and retailers.



PROCESSING

POSSIBLE RAW MATERIAL SHORTAGE AHEAD

Emergency measures in Ecuador might impact supply of tuna products and in turn [the Spanish tuna canning industry](#), which is highly dependent on frozen tuna loins from Ecuador.

Fear of contagion has induced local authorities in [Bristol Bay, Alaska, to consider closing commercial wild Pacific salmon fisheries](#). Cancellation might result in lack of good quality raw material at an affordable price for EU salmon smokers who source locally.

² Source: personal communication.



WHOLESALE

STABLE OR INCREASING PRICES DURING EASTER WEEK

The Easter period drove up demand and prices in **Italy**. In week 15, prices were up in [Rome wholesale market compared to week 14](#), especially for clam and bigger gilthead seabream but down for Tyrrhenian anchovy.

In **Spain**, in [Madrid wholesale market](#), prices were stable except for hake and anchovy.

In [Rungis wholesale market](#) in **France**, prices increased in week 15, especially for cod, brill, squid, wild-caught seabream, pollack, ray, John Dory and turbot.



RETAIL & CONSUMPTION

CONSUMERS TESTING NEW WAYS OF SHOPPING

Online sales and home delivery of seafood products have increased rapidly during lockdown. Although from low volumes, e-commerce sales of fresh produce have increased by 25% and online takeaway deliveries have doubled, according to [Rabobank analysts](#).

In **Spain**, in week 13, [fish and seafood consumption at retail level](#) increased by 11,5% for fresh products, 6,9% for frozen products and 13,3% for preserved products compared to previous week. However, the total fish and seafood consumption was 4% below the same week last year.



TRADE AND LOGISTICS

LOW DEMAND REDUCES IMPORTS, LOGISTICS STILL A BARRIER FOR EXPORTS

Other fresh products which stopped being imported in the EU in March are fresh hake from Namibia and Chile, common sole from Iceland, fresh scallops from the USA, fresh clams from Tunisia, fresh blue mussels from Norway and fresh Nile perch fillets from Uganda.

As regards extra-EU imports³, in week 14 of 2020, volume and value of extra-EU imports continued decreasing. Compared with week 13, volume dropped by 14% and value by 8%.

³ This analysis is based on weekly import data for a selection of 135 couples of CN-8 products and country of origin collected from the EU Commission – DG TAXUD. The complete list of products can be found [here](#)

Preservation of imported products	Volume variation week 14/week 12	Volume variation week 14/week 13
Fresh	+3%	+16%
Frozen	-22%	-30%
Prepared - Preserved	-24%	-13%

Volume of **fresh products** (mainly salmon and cod) imported in the last 4 weeks was **11% lower than in the same period of 2019⁴**, although a similar trend was shown in both years: after a negative peak touched in week 13, in week 14 there was a recovery.

Imports of frozen products (mainly Alaska pollock) **increased by 20% between week 11 and week 14 compared with 2019**. While they were on a downward trend in 2019, in 2020 they reached a peak during week 13, only to be followed by a decline shortly thereafter.

Imports of **prepared-preserved products** (mainly skipjack tuna) in the last 4 weeks **were 12% lower in volume compared with the same period of 2019**. While they were increasing in 2019, between week 11 and week 14 of 2020 they fell by 30%.

Salmon: after a 3-week downward trend, value increased in week 14 by 4%, due to a 9%-growth of imported volumes from Norway. Import weekly price continued to decline, from 5,68 to 5,35 EUR/kg (-6%), despite NOK appreciation (+3%).

Cod: significant growth in value and volume was registered in week 14 compared to the previous week (+20% and +26%, respectively), due to increasing imports from Norway (+38%) and Russia (+58%). Weekly price decreased by 4%, its lowest since week 7 of 2020 (5,57 EUR/kg).

Skipjack tuna continued on a downward trend, dropping by 30% in volume and 18% in value in week 14, reaching the levels recorded at the beginning of the year. The import weekly price went up from 3,06 to 3,57 EUR/kg (+17%), despite USD depreciation (+1%).

Alaska pollock: Compared to the previous week, volume and value decreased significantly (-58% and -60%, respectively), and price went down from 2,98 to 2,84 EUR/kg (-5%).

Warmwater shrimps: extra-EU imports declined by 19% in volume and 17% in value.

EU imports of fresh whole seabass and seabream from Turkey have plummeted.

Throughout March, imports dropped by more than 50%, and by more than 70% compared with week 14. Import prices were relative stable in week 13 and 14 at around 4 EUR/kg.

Data show that **EU imports of fresh/live lobster from the USA practically stopped from week 12** (due to a combination of constraints in logistics and restaurant demand). US exports of fresh/live lobster have been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

As regards currencies of top suppliers, between 15th of March and 5th of April EUR depreciated against NOK (-11%) and GBP (-4%) and appreciated against USD, CNY and ISK (USD: +2%; CNY: +1%; ISK: +4%).

To learn more about the situation on the market, [you can access most recent weekly data \(up to week 13 of 2020\) for extra EU imports in Europe](#).

⁴ To be noted that the 4-week period in 2019 did not include the week before Easter.

For any question or comment, do not hesitate to contact EUMOFA (contact-us@eumofa.eu).

ABOUT [EUMOFA](#)

The European Market Observatory for fisheries and aquaculture (EUMOFA) is a market intelligence tool on the European Union fisheries and aquaculture sector, developed by the European Commission. It aims to increase market transparency and efficiency, analyses EU markets dynamics, and supports business decisions and policy-making. EUMOFA enables direct monitoring of volumes, values and prices of fisheries and aquaculture products, from the first sale to retail stage, including imports and exports. Data are collected from EU countries, Iceland, Norway, United Kingdom and from EU institutions and updated every day.