

Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center

Aquaculture Department

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Asian Markets for reef fish

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during this period by applying illumination at night to accelerate initial feeding.

- Researchers also reported that, in *E. tauvina* larvae, the survival and growth of larvae reared in salinities between 25-39 ppt were not significantly different at the early larval stage, but those parameters were higher at a constant salinity of 25 ppt at more advanced larval stages. Best survival and growth were observed at 27-29°C for larvae from hatching to the 12th day and at 30-31°C for 19- to 33-day-old larvae.

- The larvae of *E. tauvina* were observed to die after they gorged themselves with *Artemia* nauplii. *Artemia* may be detrimental if consumed in large quantities.

- When larvae become juveniles, they show cannibalistic behavior.

- Due to the difficulties in larval rearing explained above, coupled with the difficulty in

obtaining quality eggs, the survival of grouper larvae and juveniles so far reported was generally very low, the rate being < 10% on day 7 and 1% on day 50-60, even in rearing trials which were reported to be successful.

In 1989, remarkable results have been reported on survival rate and quantity of larvae produced. The Tamano Station of the Japan Sea-Farming Association produced about 400 000 juveniles of *E. akaara* in 60-t tanks with an average survival rate of 34.1% from day 1.

Source: Masanori Doi, Munir bin Hj. Mohd Nawi, Nik Razali bin Nik Lah, and Zulkifli bin Talib. *Artificial propagation of the grouper, Epinephelus suillus at the marine finfish hatchery in Tangong Demong, Terengganu, Malaysia*. Dep't of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture, Malaysia 50628. Jan 1991.

Asian markets for reef fish

Reef fish comprise a variety of species such as grouper, snapper, bream, rock cod, and coral cod. Although able to command high prices in international markets, they are presently underutilized in many parts of the world. The four major markets for reef fish worldwide are Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, and USA. Two important Asian markets, Singapore and Hong Kong, are described.

Singapore

With a population of only 2.6 million and a per capita fish consumption of 36 kg, Singapore by itself does not constitute a significant market for fishery products. Its importance lies in the fact that it serves as an export market for fishery products from Southeast Asian countries and also as a transshipment base for these products both within and outside the region.

From Jan to July 1988, Singapore imported 18 118 t of fresh/chilled marine fish and 10 8611 of frozen marine fish. Fresh/chilled fish are mainly imported from Malaysia and Thailand to augment local supplies as consumption of whole fresh fish is the most popular form of utilization in Singapore. Although import statistics are not classified by species, it can be safely said that a substantial portion of the imports constituted reef fish such as grouper, snapper, rock cod, coral cod, and seabream. Grouper and red snapper are two popular high value fish in this market. Red snapper sells at a wholesale price of about S\$2.60 (approximately US\$1.34) per kg while rock cod and coral cod are being sold at S\$13.00/kg (approximately US\$6.70/kg) and S\$9.50/kg (approximately US\$4.65/kg), respectively.

Imports are mostly delivered directly to the Jurong Market which was established in 1969 to facilitate the importation of fresh fish to

meet increasing domestic demand as well as to capitalize on Singapore's position as one of the world's major ports.

Apart from being a fairly big importer of fish for domestic needs, Singapore also plays a major role as a re-exporter of marine products. Exports doubled from 30 000 t in 1976 to 60 000 in 1986. As labor is getting more and more expensive, processed products such as fish fillets are imported to meet the growing domestic demand. In 1987, 2498 t of frozen fish fillets were imported into Singapore. Frozen red snapper fillets are sold at wholesale level, at around S\$2.20/kg (approximately US\$1.13/kg). These are mostly Indonesian products.

There are no tariffs for the import of fish and fishery products into Singapore. However, licences for import, export, and transshipment of fish have to be obtained from the Fisheries Division of the Primary Production Department.

Hong Kong

Hong Kong is one of the most important markets for fish and fishery products. With a population of 5.5 million and an annual per capita consumption of seafood of about 4&kg, domestic demand is high.

The country is also an important trading center engaged in both the import and re-export of fish and fishery products. Imports of fresh, chilled, and frozen fish have increased from 57116 t in 1982 to 68 538 t in 1986

while exports of the same show an increase from 13 408 to 28 421 t.

The market for reef fish such as snapper, grouper, bream, and coral cod in Hong Kong is of growing importance, as is evident from the imports and re-exports of these fish.

The Aberdeen wholesale market handles the bulk of the wet fish and frozen fish landed. The market is owned and operated by the Fish Marketing Organization (FMO), a government marketing arm. Prices of reef fish at the Aberdeen wholesale market, though fluctuating according to economic and market forces, still maintain high levels.

Domestic catch is almost entirely sold in fresh form to restaurants. Imported frozen products are sold for household consumption through retail shops, restaurants, supermarkets, and the catering trade.

Live red snapper and grouper are sold at US\$18.73/kg. The species are mostly used in restaurants and hotels.

Hong Kong is a free port and there are no customs duties or quantitative restrictions on marine products. However, these are subject to statutory control governing the sale of food under the Food and Drugs Section of the Public Health and Urban Ordinance and its subsidiary legislation.

Source: *Markets for reef fish in Singapore and Hong Kong*. INFOFISH International 1/89.

