

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Germany

Post: Berlin

German Retailers To Stop Carrying Lobster Over Animal Rights

Report Categories:

Fishery Products

Agriculture in the News

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Report Highlights:

Several German discount retailers will reportedly stop carrying lobsters due to animal rights concerns.

Animal Rights and Lobsters

Several German retail food chains have reportedly agreed to stop selling lobsters this year. The stores are: Lidl, Norma, Netto Stavenhagen und Penny. While these are mostly discount retailers, they do carry lobster and offer popular holiday season sales that are an important component to the market.

German retailers are being pressured by the Albert Schweitzer Foundation and other non-governmental organizations to stop carrying lobster - both frozen and fresh – due to animal rights concerns. According to the [Foundation's web page](#), the trade in lobsters should end because, 'month long confinement without food and the cooking of living animals causes much stress and pain and suffering.'

This action follows a related campaign against the live trade in lobsters the southern German state of Bavaria. That campaign raised concerns, among other things, about the configuration of live lobster displays in retail stores.

U.S. Trade Interest

Official U.S. trade statics show U.S. lobster exports to Germany at around \$3 million in 2011. However, these numbers do not take into account inter-EU sales and actual sales to Germany are probably much larger. Sales of U.S. lobster to the EU-27 were \$187 million in 2011.

Area/Partners of Destination		January - December					
And Commodities Exported		Values in Thousands of dollars					
Lobster		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Partner	Product	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value
1 European Union-27	Lobster	\$ 167,545	\$ 199,344	\$ 196,332	\$ 176,558	\$ 179,860	\$ 187,872
2 Germany(*)	Lobster	\$ 4,842	\$ 4,014	\$ 3,170	\$ 2,645	\$ 3,766	\$ 3,095
Notes:							
1. Data Source: Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Statistics							
2. FAS Totals include all Agricultural commodities and FAS selected NONAG commodity items.							
3. (*) denotes a country that is a summarization of its component countries.							

Background on German Food Retailers

The German retail food sector is dominated by five large retailers which have more than 90 percent of the market. Germany has the highest share of discounter in food retailing (37.9 %) in the world. Aldi is the leading German discounter, followed by Lidl and Netto.

The high concentration coupled with price competition make the German food retail sector especially sensitive to the threat of negative publicity. German retailers are quite responsive to NGO concerns over animal rights, sustainability, and biotech foods, at times regardless of the facts.

Overall Market Share - German Food Retail Sector

Store Type	2010 Market Share (%)
Superstores ($\geq 2.500 \text{ m}^2$)	26.0
Supermarkets large (1.000-2.499 m^2)	14.4
Supermarkets (100-999 m^2)	13.4
Discounters	37.9
Other (mainly Drugstores)	8.3
Superstores ($\geq 2.500 \text{ m}^2$)	26.0

Source: Nielsen