



FRESHWATER FISH MARKETING CORPORATION

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RUSSIAN FOOD BAN AFFECTS LOCAL FISHERS

WINNIPEG – Russia’s ban on food imports from Australia, Norway, Canada, the US and European Union countries is hitting close to home for some regional fishers.

Freshwater fishers in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Northwest Territories are temporarily without a major market for a number of species following the ban, which was announced earlier this week.

Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation has traditionally sold lake whitefish, lake trout, inconnu and freshwater drum to Russia and will be unable to do so for at least one year.

“Freshwater is disappointed in the loss of this market because we’ve put a lot of effort into building sales in Russia over the last five years,” says Freshwater CEO John Wood. “It had become a profitable business for us and the loss of any market is not good news, because over the long run lower demand means lower prices.”

While the trade closure has economic significance, the immediate impact to fishers will be minimal, Wood says.

Demand for lake whitefish currently outweighs supply, so this will ease the shortage in other markets, such as Finland, Poland, New York and Los Angeles.

“We have been up until now limiting our sale of lake whitefish to most markets because we haven’t had enough to go around,” says Wood. “This will be a positive for all those markets and should maintain our sales volume for this species.”

Freshwater drum is one exception where immediate impact is concerned, as Russia remains the only significant market for the product.

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