

## 19 Countries in Brazil to Buy Her Shrimp

Contributed by Marcia Wonghon  
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Entrepreneurs from 19 countries, including Spain, France, Italy, and England, are participating in the II National Shrimp Fair, which runs from yesterday February 22 through Friday, February 25, in the Natal Convention Center in the northeastern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Norte.

Sixty Brazilian shrimp producers and exporters are attending the event.

Rio Grande do Norte is Brazil's biggest shrimp producer, with an annual production of 37,000 tons. During the encounter the participants will discuss commercial partnerships, technology transfer, and investment agreements.

Last year 80% of Brazilian shrimp sold abroad went to the European market.

According to the president of the Brazilian Association of Shrimp Breeders, Itamar Rocha, the shift in shrimp sales in the direction of Europe was the result of a suit by the Southern US Fishermen's Association accusing Brazil and five other countries of selling shrimp at less than what it cost to produce them (dumping) and alleging that this was harmful to fishing activities in the United States.

Due to this suit, a 23.6% surcharge was initially levied on imports of Brazilian shrimp. In July, 2004, the surcharge was lowered to its current 7.05% rate.

This surcharge caused the US share of Brazil's shrimp exports to fall from 35.2% in 2003 to 16.57% last year. The drop was from 21.2 thousand tons to 9 thousand.

Translation: David Silberstein  
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