

# News story: Overseas buyers hooked on Scottish fish

As fish and chip lovers across the UK come together to celebrate the nation's favourite dish on National Fish and Chip Day (Friday 7 June), the Department for International Trade (DIT) hails Scotland's £1bn fish industry.

Scotland is home to nearly half of the UK's fishermen – an estimated 4,823 people, making the fishing industry crucial to its economy. National Fish and Chip Day provides an opportunity to celebrate the fishermen who bring produce to plates across the world.

China is Scotland's top destination for fish exports outside of the EU and third largest destination in the world. In 2018, fish exports from Scotland to China were worth £97m. Meanwhile, the USA is the fourth largest destination for Scottish fish, with exports worth £89.5m last year.

Latest HMRC regional statistics also show that goods exports from Scotland grew faster than any other part of the UK in the year to March 2019, now worth £32.8bn.

## **International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox MP said:**

Today we celebrate our fishermen and all food producers selling some of the best ingredients, whether that's fish, potatoes, salt or vinegar. The demand for UK produce has never been greater.

Scottish fish businesses are contributing to the UK's reputation for high quality products overseas and taking advantage of the growing global appetite for our food.

The UK now has an international economic department – the Department for International Trade – helping British business succeed abroad in ways that never happened before, and I urge more Scottish food and drink businesses to consider breaking into international markets or expanding their global reach.

The Scottish fishing industry is not only seeing success in exports of white fish but also luxury seafood such as langoustines. The industry has benefitted from market access deals secured by DIT, including the export of live langoustines to China for the first time.

This deal is set to boost the Scottish fishing sector as overall exports of langoustines from the UK could be worth £26.5 million over the next five years.

One company boosting Scotland's fish industry is premier seafood family business JK Thomson. Established over 60 years ago, the Musselburgh-based

company delivers fresh and frozen seafood all over Scotland.

Today, the company's range of fish is also enjoyed by thousands of people in the United Arab Emirates, Jamaica, Switzerland and more.

**Paul Thomson, Partner at JK Thomson, said:**

We are proud to be a fourth-generation family business, with six of our children now working in different areas of the company.

We are excited about the potential there is for the next generation to enter new markets abroad and continue providing our high-quality Scottish fish to customers at home and all over the world.

JK Thomson also supplies its fish products to supermarkets, local hotels, restaurants and fish and chips shops across Scotland including Cromars in St Andrews and Alandas.

For 25 years, the company exported to the Netherlands, Spain and France, but is now exploring new markets in the Caribbean, Middle East, Asia and North America.

JK Thomson is committed to responsible and sustainable sourcing, quality and consistency. Its state-of-the-art premises in Musselburgh employs 130 people, with plans to expand the factory as it looks to broaden its export reach and meet global demand.