

Tips on gaining a larger share of the military market for seafood products.

Procedure for Product Approval and Purchase: Army and Air Force Exchange Service¹

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The Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) procures food products for use by military installations worldwide, including post exchange (PX) and base exchange (BX) food outlets, but excluding troop feeding, clubs, and commissaries. AAFES is a large buyer. In 1972 it handled food products valued over \$176 million, including seafood valued over \$1.4 million. Examples of frozen seafood products currently approved for purchase include: catfish (whole and fillets), clam fingers, cod (fillets, sticks, and cakes), crab cakes, batter-dipped fish (unspecified), flounder portions, haddock portions, halibut (steaks and fillets), scallops, shrimp (breaded, P & D, and tempura), breaded oysters, perch fillets, seabass fillets, seacake (unspecified) and com-minuted croaker portions.

Although AAFES represents a fairly large outlet for a diverse number of seafood products at present, it is felt that this market outlet has not been fully developed either in terms of volume or number of products. And a major reason for this is that most potential suppliers lack adequate knowledge of this market. Actually, AAFES is quite flexible in its manner of procurement of supplies and will accept samples and

product information from any manufacturer (prime source) or regular dealer. AAFES is desirous of providing on-base military personnel with fine quality products at the best price possible. During each year it observes and samples hundreds of different food items in order to keep current with the ever changing trends in food.

INTRODUCING A PRODUCT

The general procedure in selling to AAFES is to arrange first for an appointment with one of the procurement specialists at AAFES headquarters or at one of five exchange regions, preferably one located nearest to the point of distribution (refer to map and list of corresponding list of addresses). The procurement specialist contacted generally calls in one or more food specialists to determine whether or not there is any interest in the product. Samples should be made available with as much written information as possible. Any additional oral information during the meeting with the group or individual is always helpful. Some selling points of the product by the vendor add strength to the transaction. If the procurement specialist feels there is a possibility of using the product, it is then tested and sampled in AAFES facilities by food specialists and it is then determined if it will be accepted or rejected.

This procedure takes a minimum of

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ten days to two weeks. The individual or firm that presented the product is notified, usually by telephone, as to the result, although it is permissible for the vendor to contact AAFES at an earlier date if he wishes.

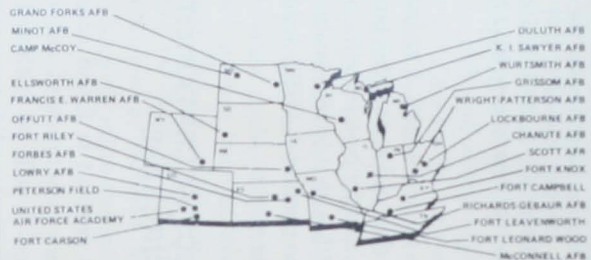
PRODUCT ACCEPTABILITY AND PURCHASE

If the product is found acceptable, temporary procurement authority is given and it will be included in the AAFES Food and Expense Supplies Purchase Descriptions, ESM 65-3. This manual is revised and distributed to the various procurement officers, as needed. Even though the product has been accepted and placed in the manual, this does not mean that the procurement officer will buy and use the product. A follow-up by the vendor at the various purchasing centers in the area where he might be interested in selling is one of the best ways of getting the product used. Supplying the individual procurement officer with sufficient samples and information is helpful in getting the product used in that particular region or area.

¹This explanation of procedures for product approval and purchase is based on information supplied by the Army and Air Force Exchange Service personnel in Dallas, Texas.

OHIO VALLEY EXCHANGE REGION

HQ. CHARLESTOWN, INDIANA 26 EXCHANGES



LEGEND:

- AAFES Hq.
- ★ Regional Hq.

GOLDEN GATE EXCHANGE REGION

HQ. SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

EXCHANGES



CAPITOL EXCHANGE REGION

HQ. ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

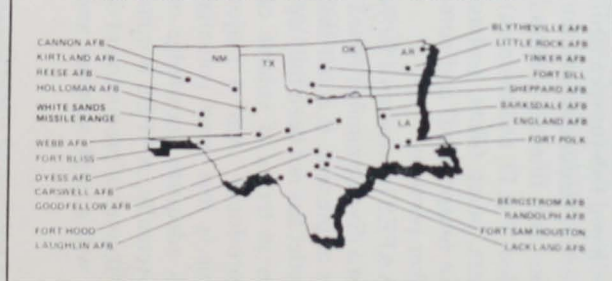
23 EXCHANGES



ALAMO EXCHANGE REGION

HQ. SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

24 EXCHANGES



SOUTHEAST EXCHANGE REGION

HQ. MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

22 EXCHANGES

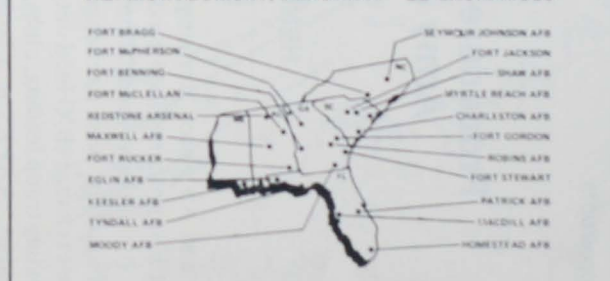


Figure 1.—Regions of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service and installations served.

All purchases for overseas exchanges are made by procurement personnel at AAFES Headquarters in Dallas. Purchases for exchange feeding facilities in the United States (excluding Hawaii and Alaska) are made in the five regional purchasing centers by procurement personnel.

PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS

Before actual purchase, all products must meet specifications. Although not necessary, it is helpful if the plant where the product is processed operates under some type of inspection service. Otherwise, processing plants or distributors are inspected on a periodic basis by government representatives. There is no charge for this service, which covers sanitation, type of equipment used, general appearance of plant and grounds, location, appearance of employees, and other factors that would indicate the proper processing and distribution of the product.

In sum, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service represents a potentially

large market which has not been fully developed by our domestic seafood industry. It is hoped the information contained in this report will assist industry in pursuing this opportunity.

Addresses and telephone numbers of AAFES headquarters and regions (Figure 1) are:

Headquarters

Mr. Edward E. Ausel
Buyer Consumables
Headquarters, AAFES
3911 South Walton Walker Boulevard
Dallas, Texas 75222
Tel: 214-330-3644

Mr. Lawrence M. Lefkof
Overseas Buyer
Headquarters, AAFES
3911 South Walton Walker Boulevard
Dallas, Texas 75222
Tel: 214-330-3836

Regions

Ohio Valley Exchange Region,
AAFES

Attention: Seafood Buyer
Building 2501
Indiana Army Ammunition Plant
Charleston, Indiana 47111
Tel: 812-283-1502

Capitol Exchange Region, AAFES
Attention: Seafood Buyer
Building 6
Cameron Station, Virginia 22314
Tel: 703-751-2000

Southeast Exchange Region, AAFES
Attention: Seafood Buyer
Montgomery Industrial Terminal
Building T-5
1280 Kershaw Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36108
Tel: 205-264-7301

Alamo Exchange Region, AAFES
Attention: Seafood Buyer
Building 370
Fort Sam Houston, Texas 78234
Tel: 512-225-5381

Golden Gate Exchange Region,
AAFES
Attention: Seafood Buyer
Box 3553
San Francisco, Calif. 94119
Tel: 415-556-3400

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