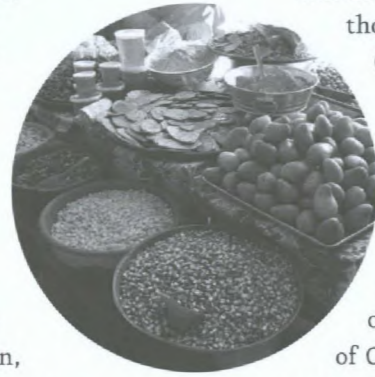


Mexican agri-food decision makers talk trade at round table

Mexico City > On November 10, the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City launched the first in a series of Mexican Agri-Food Importers Round Table sessions. Canadian Ambassador Gaëtan Lavertu opened the event, which attracted 17 Mexican agri-food importers and distributors of Canadian food and beverage products, from Guadalajara, Monterrey and Mexico City. In addition, Canadian agri-food companies with offices in Mexico such as McCains and Maple Leaf, as well as the Canadian Beef Export Federation, attended the event. Export Development Canada's representative in Mexico City, Canada's Border Clearance Representative and officials from the Canadian Consulate General in Monterrey, the Canadian Consulate in Guadalajara and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada also participated.

The session served to further clarify Mexican importers' concerns on market access and border



issues, and provided them with a better understanding of the Government of Canada's services and Canada's agri-food market development strategy. Above all, the event was an opportunity for participants to share their thoughts on how to increase the presence of Canadian agri-food products in Mexico.

Importers were extremely pleased with the session—additional round table discussions will be organized to focus on specific themes.

Mexico is one of Canada's fastest-growing agri-food export markets and one of five priority markets for the Government of Canada in this sector. In 2004, Canada exported a record \$1.4 billion in agri-food products, an increase of almost 60 percent over 2003. Agri-food exports represented 23 percent of Canada's total exports to Mexico in 2004.

For more information, contact Marcello DiFranco, Canadian Embassy in Mexico, tel.: (011-52-55) 5724-7900, e-mail: marcello.difranco@international.gc.ca, Web site: www.mexico.gc.ca.

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positive importing experience and increased sales to the U.S.

The one-day event in Plattsburgh was well-attended; the mix of attendees included Quebec food companies, customs brokers, transportation companies and state and federal government representatives from the U.S. and Canada. Presentations were provided by the FDA, U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to review the part they each play in preparing companies to meet U.S. importation requirements.

The participants appreciated having an opportunity to meet directly with the government representatives that are physically involved in the decision-making process at Quebec/New York border crossings. As a result of this event, the FDA in Buffalo requested that the Consulate General work with them in developing a similar program for Ontario companies in March 2006.

For more information, please contact Marcia Grove, Trade Commissioner, Canadian Consulate General in Buffalo, tel.: (716) 858-9500, e-mail: marcia.grove@international.gc.ca.

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to foster the creation of public- and private-sector networks and partnerships. These networks will continue to pay off through increased trade and investment between the two countries. Two additional working groups, one focusing on agri-business and the other on energy, were recently created, resulting in the Partnership's expansion to five groups.

Against the backdrop of the CMP, Canadian and Mexican firms have collaborated on numerous projects that have led to increased trade and investment opportunities. In the working group on housing, Mexican members agreed to incorporate innovative and sustainable Canadian technologies into their construction projects. Mexican companies in the urban development working group have begun to introduce Canadian wastewater treatment facilities into rural Mexican communities. The competitiveness working group is focused on reducing barriers to trade and investment and promoting Mexico-Canada business partnerships, in order to attain its goals of increasing bilateral trade by

50 percent and investment by 100 percent by 2010. As each working group continues to evolve, these projects will expand and new initiatives will be implemented.

The Canada-Mexico Partnership has added a new dimension to our dynamic relationship and effectively complements both NAFTA and the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America. The dedication and hard work that characterize the Partnership will continue to enhance cooperation between Mexico and Canada for many years to come.

For more information, go to www.itcan-cican.gc.ca/cmp-en.asp.

Tapping into a hot Mexican market

Mexico City > After a recent trade mission to Mexico, seven leading Canadian building product manufacturers are closer to their goal of building partnerships and increasing exports to a sizzling Latin American market. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the Canadian Embassy in Mexico organized the mission, part of an eight-month custom export program that matches the profiles and business objectives of participating companies.

The visit coincided with the release of a CMHC report on the buying patterns of Mexican developers. Among the findings: more than 50 percent of developers showed interest in finding new suppliers and nearly 40 percent worked with foreign suppliers. This year, Mexico's building products market is expected to top \$7.2 billion.

Representatives of Genesis TP (light-steel frame construction system), Icynene Inc. (foam insulation), Royal Dynamics (Dura Slate Roofing System), Loewen Windows (high-end wood windows), ThermaRay (thermal comfort systems), Phantom Screens (window screens) and PG Flooring (hardwood flooring) were on the trip to Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey in October.

"We have joined the CMHC Mexico mission for the past four years because the mission and follow-up support have helped our company increase our market penetration," says Roberto Amaya, Latin America Territory Manager for Loewen Windows.

Each company met with pre-qualified potential buyers, agents or distributors; promoted their products at technical seminars for builders and architects; visited both low- and high-rise construction sites; and were invited to Latin America's largest construction trade show, Expo CIHAC 2005.

"Identifying appropriate Canadian products and offering a customized approach to finding the right buyers in Mexico have been critical to our success," says Paulina Barnes, CMHC Senior Trade



The delegation of Canadian manufacturers in Mexico.

Consultant. "We target the high-end construction market, which offers Canadian companies the most opportunities."

For more information on the Mexico Building Patterns report, visit the CMHC Web site at www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/homadoin/excaprex/suexin/upload/Mexico_EN.pdf.