



Canada releases branding guide for food sector

Knowing Canadian food and agriculture products are second to none, marketing experts from the food and agriculture sector collaborated with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and provincial partners to develop a branding Canada guide for exporters.

Quality is in our Nature: A Guide to Building and Managing the Canada Brand for Food and Agriculture contains valuable information to help exporters strategically market Canada as a supplier of high-quality, safe, innovative and customer-focused products.

The guide is based on studies measuring perceptions of Canada's agriculture and food sector among buyers and consumers in key markets: the U.S., Mexico, Japan and the EU.

Although the global marketplace is highly competitive, a comprehensive strategy offers increased visibility and opportunities to leverage Canada's positive image, say government officials.

"Brands are built over time and created by the efforts of many," says Janice Vansickle, Executive Director of Branding Management at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. "This strategy is about finding what the world wants from us, and delivering—one transaction at a time in a consistent fashion."

While the studies paint Canada as a reliable supplier of safe, high-quality goods and as trustworthy, environmentally

aware, competent and credible, they also indicate Canadians are seen as traditional, and lacking innovation and business drive. The branding strategy can help overcome these negative perceptions.

The studies, which reveal ways the Canadian industry can differentiate themselves from the competition, led to the development of a brand promise or mission statement for governments and sector participants: "We are committed to earning our customers' trust in Canadian agriculture and food products every day through our relentless pursuit of excellence in all that we do."



The guide also promotes the public images of the brand, including a stylized maple leaf and ribbon and the tag line: *Quality is in our nature*.

Companies and associations must sign a usage agreement for use of the visual elements of the brand.

Realizing the potential of the Canada brand is a long-term, cooperative effort by everyone, say officials. This guide kick-starts the process.

For more information, go to www.brandcanada.agr.gc.ca.

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Macao set to become gambling capital of the world

Macao, the Special Administrative Region on the southern coast of China, has hit the jackpot.

Gambling revenues in the former Portuguese colony are expected to surpass those in Las Vegas this year. But just as it becomes a magnet for tourists and baccarat enthusiasts, Macao is also becoming a convention and entertainment powerhouse—and Canadian exporters can steal the show.

The economic growth all started in 2002, when Macao eliminated a 40-year-old gaming monopoly and when China liberalized individual travel there one year later. "With that surge in economic activity, opportunities came fast in a wide range of sectors, from agri-food and infrastructure to entertainment and security," says Francois Rivest, Senior Trade Commissioner with the Canadian Consulate General in Hong Kong.

"You just have to look at the agri-food sector," says Rivest, who points out that Macao has become one of Canada's most important markets for food products. "The influx of tourists means high-end Canadian food products will be in demand," he says. This includes beverages, seafood products and ready-to-serve pastry products.

He says there is also demand for retail-ready, pre-packaged gift food like confectionery and premium food and beverage items. But Rivest turns his attention to entertainment, which he says goes hand-in-hand with a gambling mecca.

"Foreign cultural performances and exhibitions, including those from Canada, are becoming more popular and opportunities are opening up for Canadian artists and performers. He explains that in 2008, a permanent facility for Quebec's Cirque du Soleil will open at the Venetian resort hotel, which is currently under construction in Macao. The 1,800-seat facility will bring this unique Canadian entertainment experience to thousands of tourists each year.

The development of upscale resort hotels like the Venetian has also opened up opportunities for design and engineering

professionals. Canadian architects, interior designers, engineering consultants and exporters with innovative building products are well-positioned to take advantage of Macao's growth. Training for human resources in the hospitality sector is another area Canadian firms may wish to pursue.

Infrastructure opportunities don't end at hotels and casinos.

Rivest says that Canadian companies are also well-placed to take part in large infrastructure and transportation projects such as the underwater tunnel linking Macao proper to Taipa Island, a 35-kilometre bridge linking Macao to Hong Kong and Zhuhai, and the recently announced \$600 million, 22-kilometre elevated light metro project. Several Canadian firms are pursuing the opportunities to supply the traffic control surveillance and journey time indication systems to these projects.

To cope with this sharp rise in tourists and the increasing number of casinos, Rivest points out that additional security measures are being adopted at both border control points, casinos and hotels.

"There's another way Canadian companies can get in on the action. After all, Canadian security technology companies in travel document authentication, access control, closed circuit television and metal detectors have excellent competitive advantages when it comes to meeting Macao's security demands." And there are resources to help Canadian exporters meet these demands.

The Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute, the trade and investment promotion arm of the Macao government, has established the Macao Business Support Centre which helps to

reduce initial setup costs for foreign investors by providing them with office facilities and secretarial services.

"This helps exporters become familiar with Macao's business and government environments," says Rivest. Successful applicants can stay up to four months in the Centre and an extension of two months is also allowed under special circumstances.

For more information, contact Eunice Wong, Canadian Consulate General in Hong Kong, email: eunice.wong@international.gc.ca, fax: (011-852) 2847-7441.



After becoming a Special Administrative Region of China in 1999, Macao enjoys a high degree of autonomy in all matters except national defence and foreign affairs.