

Industry

The value-added food industry can take many actions at the industrial level through the appropriate trade association to provide valuable support to member companies who are developing export markets. Support can be offered in developing cooperative promotional activities, encouraging linkages and trading relationships with domestic and foreign companies, education and information dissemination.

In November of 1992, the Government of Canada, represented by the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of International Trade announced a major initiative to increase the exports of Canadian agricultural products, with a special emphasis on value-added foods. The initiative, called the Trade Opportunities Strategy (TOS), comprised of four major activities:

- The PEMD Agri-food program, to help agri-food associations increase international marketing efforts on behalf of their members by cost-sharing incremental generic market development activities;
- Increasing the number of people in trade posts abroad dedicated to the agri-food sector, by as many as ten additional officers;
- Creating a red-meats international training facility;
- Creating a team within Canada of staff of Agriculture Canada and FAIT to rapidly investigate trade irritants.

The full implementation of the TOS will allow exporters and their associations a wide range of new export development tools with which to develop new export markets and strengthen existing ones. Foreign Affairs and International Trade fully supports these new programs and will be assisting exporters and their associations in every way possible.

Co-operative promotional activities are an area that the industry can benefit by taking action at the trade association level. Including:

- Studying the feasibility of developing a more generic Canadian food product image, developing promotional materials for generic export promotion; sharing generic marketing costs, offering buyers a more complete package, increasing potential supply, and broadening market penetration.
- Promote Canadian food on the basis of "Product of Canada" as opposed to a regional basis, except where there are special advantages eg. Ann of Green Gables/PEI for the Japanese market;