



FOOD and BEVERAGE

Market Overview

The UK has become slightly obsessed by food—its quality, preparation and consumption. London now boasts more Michelin-starred restaurants than any other city outside Paris. Be it organic, ethnic, *nouvelle* or fusion, whether home-prepared or a product of the world's most dynamic hospitality industry, good food is now synonymous with Great Britain. The UK has redefined itself with a food culture that is open to new ideas and tastes. Two principal reasons largely account for this change: a competitive and creative environment in which food is bought both at retail and service outlets, encouraged by an economy that boomed through the mid-to-late 1990s; and the rapidly evolving sociodemographic face of many of Britain's cities. Both dynamics have allowed experimentation, indulgence and self-confidence to push back many frontiers, including the traditional British food basket or restaurant meal.

Opportunities

Total UK food, feed and drink imports amount to over £17 billion (C\$39 billion) a year. Canada's share of this import market is in the 1+% range at over £200 million (C\$460 million). Lobster, salmon, fruit snack bars and wild blueberries are tastes of Canada, as are freshly made bagels, British Columbia wines, premium extra mature cheddar from Quebec, Caesar salad kits from Ontario, and organic breakfast cereals. These products all illustrate the same implicit point. The UK recognizes Canada as a supplier of the highest-quality food

products. Thus, there is both room and reason for growth in Canadian agri-food exports. Opportunities abound in this market of 60 million affluent consumers.

The UK has a wide array of relevant trade and consumer food shows, which introduce Canadian products to the widest UK audience possible. Whatever your product, food and beverage trade shows are generally the most economic and efficient means of promoting, making a broad range of contacts and assessing the competition. Check them out at: http://ats-sea.agr.ca/public/events_europe-e.htm

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