

\$62,500 to \$65,000.

The import specialists are seconded from Japanese trading companies.

The task of the import specialist is to provide Canadian exporters with guidance and advice on how to access the Japanese market, and to facilitate contacts with Japanese importers. Activities include providing advice to Canadian exporters who are new to the Japanese market, or who are having difficulties in moving ahead (e.g. how to access the Japanese market). Subsidiary and unofficial activities include assisting Canadian exporters to make contacts, and market intelligence.

The first import specialist consulted with over 240 Canadian companies in the first two years of the project. The second import specialist placed less emphasis on numbers of companies consulted and more on quality candidates and in-depth advice.

JETRO reports that by the end of September 1993, 11 companies were selling in Japan as a result of consultations with the import specialist, for a total value of \$2.4 million. It is anticipated that this will have a ripple effect as these and other companies which have received advice, put their knowledge to use. Of the 46 companies consulted by the first import specialist, which had provided a status report for 1991/92, 47% were exporting, and 53% had shown little or no progress. A list of on-going projects prepared for the July 1993 stakeholders' meeting shows that of the 14 companies involved in on-going consultations with the second import specialist, 29% had received sample orders, 29% were negotiating or discussing with potential partners, and 42% were in earlier stages (e.g. looking for a partner).

Some of the reasons for slow progress identified by the status report of 1991/92 included difficulties in finding a partner, and strong price/quality competition.

The majority of the eight companies interviewed in the case study reported that the services provided by the import specialist had been beneficial to their company. In particular the import specialist:

- had provided them with guidance through difficult negotiations, or by helping them become more confident;
- had contributed to making them more aware of the opportunities in Japan;
- had generated contacts, but at the time of interview few of these had developed into business contacts.

The most useful service was the guidance with respect to how to approach the Japanese market. Less success was experienced in the establishment of contacts and in provision of market intelligence (where provided, it tended to be a duplication of other sources). The second import specialist's emphasis on quality rather than quantity of those serviced is alleged to have produced