

Trade Mission Proposal



Alan Archibald,
Director of Marketing for the
B.C. Salmon Farmers
Association (BCSFA) was
invited to the February 5,
1989, meeting of the
independent farmers in the
Campbell River area to

discuss the "crisis" in sales prices and potential solutions. At the meeting Mr. Archibald noted that funds were available through External Affairs and International Trade Canada, to support a trade mission to the Boston Seafood Show. He suggested that participation in the show would help the group achieve some of their identified needs including:

1. an increased awareness of seafood sales and distribution;
2. the development of marketing ideas;
3. the establishment of buyer contacts; and
4. the gathering of much needed market intelligence.

These then became the objectives of the trade mission.

Arrangements were made with External Affairs and International Trade Canada identifying the group and the contact person Don Tillapaugh. Plans were set within two weeks. Because of time constraints, the salmon farmers felt that seven days was the maximum time available for the mission. Allowing two days for travel, it was felt that the emphasis should be placed on the Seafood Show because all the major buyers would be in attendance. Following the show, part of the group planned to visit the Fulton Fish Market in New York while others planned to investigate commercial/retail sales and distribution in the New England area. Prior to departure, a letter of introduction and an invitation to meet the group at the Boston Seafood Show (see Appendix D) was sent to a number of potential contacts provided by External Affairs and International Trade Canada. To adequately cover the show and be available for buyer contacts at the BCSFA booth, the group was divided into three subgroups.

Boston Seafood Show



The Boston Seafood Show is the world's largest seafood trade show. Held in the Hynes Convention Center and occupying two entire floors, 800 exhibitors from some 25 countries occupy over 1 000 booths to display

their products to more than 20 000 seafood buyers. Fifty to sixty per cent of the seafood business in the United States is done through Boston.

The general feeling among the B.C. salmon farmers after the first day at the Boston Seafood Show was of depression because British Columbia salmon lacked a presence at the show. Certainly the BCSFA had a single booth but, standing alone, it commanded little attention. The other major salmon-farming areas of the world had large, highly impressive displays. The photos in Appendix E demonstrate the marketing efforts of B.C.'s competitors. Norway, the world leader in farmed salmon production, had three entire aisles of display area. To attract attention they offered to check blood cholesterol levels of attendees. Their displays were second to none and they had private enclosed areas for completing deals. The Scottish Salmon Board had an attractive booth with a man outfitted in traditional kilt and highland garb, cooking their products for interested buyers. The Chileans, who produce about the same amount of salmon as B.C., had an entire aisle with a triple booth at the end. The Irish salmon farmers also had a very high-profile national display.

British Columbia was represented by the BCSFA, B.C. Packers, J.S. McMillan Fisheries, Calkins and Burke, and Royal Pacific Sea Farms Ltd. Each B.C. farmed salmon company had an individual booth while competitors from other countries all displayed side by side under their national banner and in doing so created a real presence. If, for example, a buyer wanted to purchase Chilean farmed salmon, the Chilean