

source of Canadian pork and others noted that Canadian forays into the market have been sporadic and not followed up with a permanent presence.

Mexican buyers for retail and food service companies regard Canadian pork products as superior, but note that this is not necessarily perceived by consumers. Point-of-sale product promotion is common in Mexico, and retailers usually expect suppliers to support these efforts. Canadian companies can promote the quality, taste, leanness and good reputation of their products by helping retailers to convey these qualities to consumers.

At the processing level, Canadian firms can emphasize the similarity of texture, fat content and taste between Canadian and Mexican pork. They can also point out that Canadian pork has optimal pH levels and, therefore, longer shelf-life.

Many Canadian companies have found that partnerships or strategic alliances with local companies are an effective way of entering the Mexican market. Vertically-integrated companies that want to fill gaps in their product lines are often good prospects. Mexican importers and distributors may be interested in switching to Canadian products, provided that the necessary long-term marketing support is provided.

TRADE SHOWS

Participation in trade shows is a time-proven method of introducing new products and making contacts with potential customers and partners. There are several relevant shows held regularly in Mexico:

- *Expo-Guadalajara*, held annually in Guadalajara, usually in December;
- *Convención Nacional de Empacadores de Carnes Frías y Embutidos y Exposición*

Internacional de Proveedores, a national meat packers' convention and suppliers' exposition held annually during February in Monterrey;

- *Exposición y Convención Nacional de Comercio Detallista*, a national Mexican food and consumer product retailers' convention and trade show held annually during March in Guadalajara;
- *Expo-alimentos*, a food and beverage industry exhibition held annually during September in Monterrey; and
- *Abastur*, the national salon for the hotel and restaurant industries, sponsored by the International Food Service Manufacturer's Association, held in Mexico City during October.

KEY CONTACTS

CANADA

Canadian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT)

DFAIT is the Canadian federal government department most directly responsible for trade development. The InfoCentre should be the first contact point for advice on how to start exporting. It provides information on export-related programs and services, acts as an entry point to DFAIT's trade information network, and can provide copies of specialized export publications and market information to interested companies.

InfoCentre

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FaxLink: (613) 944-4500
InfoCentre Bulletin Board (IBB):
Tel.: 1-800-628-1581 or (613) 944-1581

Commercial Division of the Embassy of Canada in Mexico can provide vital assistance to Canadians venturing into the Mexican market. The trade commissioners are well-informed about the market and will respond in whatever measures possible to support a Canadian firm's presence in Mexico.

Note: to telephone Mexico City, dial: 011-52-5 before the number shown. For contacts in other cities in Mexico, consult the international code listing at the front of your local telephone directory for the appropriate regional codes.

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