

Grains & Seeds

The Canadian Wheat Board is responsible for marketing Canadian wheat to Iran, and has a long-standing relationship with the Iranian General Trading Corporation, which has the authority to import cereal grains. As Iran continues to expand its own production, estimated to reach 10.3 million tonnes in 1993, opportunities for technical cooperation with Canada in grain handling and management will become increasingly important. Iranian officials have shown interest in canola seed production and in certifying canola oil for human consumption. Given that Iran annually imports about 400,000 tonnes of edible oils, canola may represent one of the largest untapped opportunities for direct sales in this market.

Grain Storage & Handling Equipment

Iran has placed, as a high priority, increased production of wheat, barley and other cereal grains. Grain storage facilities and grain handling equipment currently in place in Iran are insufficient and, in some cases, antiquated. The Ministry of Agriculture is developing an expansion and updating programme, leading to opportunities for Canadian companies with the appropriate technology and expertise. Technology transfer will be an important element of Iran's expansion in this sector.

Agricultural Equipment & Services

Large-scale farming enterprises are not the norm in Iran, and smaller agricultural land holdings are predominant. As a result, there is little demand for large agricultural equipment, except in the case of agricultural cooperatives established following the Revolution. Farming and food production will require more sophisticated planting and harvesting techniques in Iran in the future, and demand will increase for agricultural implements such as seeders, sprayers, harvesters, irrigation equipment and the like. In most, if not all cases, agreements to sell such machinery and equipment in Iran will require technology transfer and possibly local production agreements as Iran moves towards its commitment to be a manufacturer and supplier of this equipment in the region. This holds true as well for poultry stock, equipment and services, for which there is a large demand as Iran's population increases.

Requirements for agricultural services, farm management training and exchange of expertise on dryland farming techniques will increase as Iran's agricultural community modernizes and updates techniques virtually unchanged in the past decade or more.

Dairy Cattle, Semen & Embryos

Currently, Iran's dairy cattle population stands at around two million head, distributed among individual dairy farmers. The largest dairy enterprises have herds as large as 1500-2000. Many of these dairy cows have been imported from Canada, the United States, Germany and Holland. Canadian dairy cattle are highly regarded for both quantity and quality of milk production, and there will be continuing demand for registered dairy cattle whose import is now controlled by the Ministry of Jihad-e-Sazandegheh.

At the same time, quality semen for Iran's own dairy cattle reproduction programme, and to a lesser extent the sale of embryos, will mean increased marketing opportunities for Canadian suppliers. A Dairy Genetics Seminar, sponsored by Agriculture Canada in the fall of 1992 with the cooperation of the Ministry of Jihad-e-Sazandegheh, highlighted Canadian capabilities in these areas, and underlined the possibilities for training and services from Canada as well.

Veterinary Supplies & Pharmaceuticals

A virtually untouched area for Canada to date, there are attractive possibilities for the sale of all types of veterinary supplies and pharmaceuticals for Iran's two million dairy cattle. Local production of veterinary medicines, vitamins and supplements, antibiotics and other supplies does not meet local demand. Imports from Eastern European countries (which are regarded as poor quality), and from Europe (seen as very expensive), means that Canadian veterinary suppliers can carve out a profitable niche in this market. As in other sectors, foreign suppliers must also be willing to consider joint-venture agreements for local production.