



news release

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MACLAREN AND TOBIN WELCOME CHANGE IN FRANCE'S LABELLING REQUIREMENT FOR CANADIAN SCALLOPS

The Honourable Roy MacLaren, Minister for International Trade, and the Honourable Brian Tobin, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, welcomed France's latest decision concerning the labelling of Canadian scallops being sold in France.

The French government will allow Canadian shucked scallops to be marketed in France as "noix de Saint-Jacques" (*Placopecten magellanicus*) instead of "noix de pétoncles" until December 31, 1995. The designation "noix de pétoncles" has an inferior image in France and draws a lower price.

The French decision announced last week comes after numerous bilateral discussions as well as consultations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade dispute settlement process.

"We welcome the French decision, which will ensure that our exporters of scallops will not suffer from lower prices in the French market," Mr. MacLaren said. "But we will continue to press the French government to make this designation permanent."

"We have been consulting with Canadian industry on a regular basis and agree that the term 'noix de Saint-Jacques' is acceptable but that 'noix de pétoncles' is not," Mr. Tobin said. "I am determined to ensure that our hard-pressed Atlantic fishing industry will not suffer from unjustified trade barriers after 1995," he added.

Since 1945 Canadian shucked scallops had been sold in the French market as "noix de coquilles Saint-Jacques" or "noix de Saint-Jacques." In March 1993 France issued a decree requiring Canadian shucked scallops to be labelled as "noix de pétoncles." Scallops sold under this designation have a market price 20-25 percent lower than either "noix de coquilles Saint-Jacques" or "noix de Saint-Jacques." This change in labelling requirement seriously affected Canadian scallop exports to France from Atlantic Canada, currently worth more than \$13 million annually.