

Investigating partnership opportunities

Japanese biotech mission visits Canada

When representatives from some of the world's leading biotech companies and organizations get together to talk shop, expect the results to be promising. And that was precisely the case when a Japanese delegation of 49 representatives from 30 biotech companies in Osaka and Tokyo visited Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver in June. Throughout the week-long mission, the Japanese delegates explored opportunities in a number of biotech fields with their Canadian counterparts.

The delegates — many were being exposed to the Canadian biotech sector for the first time — represented a broad cross-section of the Japanese life-sciences sector, from bio-pharmaceutical companies, both large and small, to investment firms and large trading companies.

The objective of the mission was clear: to discover ways for Japan and Canada to share biotechnology expertise through investment and commercial partnerships. The conclusion shared by the participants was equally clear: the potential for cooperation is so great that the two countries are considering a similar mission next year in Japan.

Of particular interest to the Japanese delegates were the recent developments taking place in Canada's biotech sector. They were impressed by the progress made as a result of the Canadian government's "Innovation Policy", and \$500 million in federal funding for biotechnology. The visiting delegation also regarded Canada's Networks of

Centres of Excellence (NCE) as models of cooperation between the government, academia and industry.

With biotechnology now a priority sector in Japan, discussions were focused on the following specialties:

- drug development using computer-assisted modeling (bio- and chem-informatics);
- drug delivery systems;
- advanced diagnostic tools;
- prosthetic devices;
- tissue engineering and transplantation;
- immunology-based control of infection and inflammation;
- innovative consumer healthcare products, including functional foods and nutraceuticals.

Positive reactions

In Toronto (June 8-12), the visitors were invited to participate in the **Pan Asian Partnering** event, held at the Toronto Board of Trade and organized by the Science and Technology and Japan divisions of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Japanese delegates met with 48 Canadian biotech companies as did some 50 firms from other Asian countries, including Singapore, Korea, and Taiwan. More than 137 private meetings took place during a two-hour period, granting Japanese participants a close-up — and very favorable — view of Canada's dynamic biotech industry.

Next on the agenda was the **"Forum on Biotechnology and Innovation in Canada"** which featured a discussion about the implications of the federal government's new innovation policy on Canadian R&D. Following

the forum, the delegation headed to the Metro Convention Center for seminars on "Doing Business Globally", "Financing", "Partnering", "Investing", and "Clinical and Regulatory Issues", part of the presentations featured at **Bio 2002**.

In **Montreal** (June 12-13), the delegation learned about Quebec's biotech industry from Montreal International



Mission members in front of Shire/Biochem, in Montreal.

and Investment Quebec. Outreach activities to Cité de la biotechnologie, Shire/Biochem, Theratechnologies and the NRC's Institut de recherche en biotechnologie capped the Montreal visit.

The mission ended in **Vancouver** on June 14. Key activities included briefings by B.C. Trade and Investment, the B.C. Biotechnology Alliance (www.bcbiotech.ca), the University of British Columbia, the Canadian Genetic Diseases Network (www.cgdnet.ca), and the B.C. Cancer Agency (www.bccancer.bc.ca).

There is little doubt that the positive impact of this mission will be felt for many months to come — an excellent indication of future success for biotech partnerships between the two countries.

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(For the unabridged version and a list of Japanese biotech companies, see www.infoexport.gc.ca/canadexport and click on "A Yen for Japan".)

Canadian books bound for China

Beijing International Book Fair



Happy ending

Despite a relatively modest budget, the Embassy and CCA managed to put on a very good show. The Canadian content consisted of works from well-established authors, as well as books by the next generation of our literary stars. CCA supported concurrently a tour of five writers, who all visited the fair before travelling on to Ningbo for a conference on Canadian Literature



At the Beijing International Book Fair (from left to right): David Wang, from the Ottawa International Writers Festival; Thomas Wharton, writer; Andrew Pyper, writer; Dr. Shirley Thomson, CCA Director; Ruby Wiebe, writer; Monique Proulx, writer; Dr. David Staines, Dean of Arts, U. of Ottawa, critic; Canada's Ambassador Joseph Caron; Gordon Platt, CCA; and Joan Clark, writer.

organized by the Chinese Association for Canadian Studies.

The strong content attracted large crowds, as well as the attention of the Chinese print, radio and television media. CCA distributed 8,000 copies of a flyer on Canadian literature it produced in Mandarin as well as 6,000 bookmarks produced by the Embassy featuring the Canada-China logo. CCA's Gordon Platt fielded hundreds of inquiries from industry professionals. (Major opportunities are listed at the end of this report.)

Such strong interest in Canadian literature speaks volumes about the progression of China's new "open door"

policy, and their interest in developing a market-driven publishing industry.

Epilogue

Since China's entry into the WTO, the Chinese have been looking for material to help them teach foreign languages, especially English. They are also very interested in Canadian literature and society, and how — given China's own move toward a market system — Canada has developed a blend of public and private investment in book publishing.

Next edition

The Embassy and CCA have already compiled a wish list for next year's Beijing International Book Fair, and hope to attract more representatives from the Canadian publishing industry:

- additional space to accommodate groups from Canada such as the Association for the Export of Canadian Books (AECB) (www.aecb.org) or literary agents;
- publishers' catalogues, with brief introductions in Chinese;
- Chinese listing of major speciality publishing houses in Canada;
- more non-fiction books;
- seminars describing the publishing environment in Canada.

For more information on opportunities, contact China and Mongolia Division, DFAIT, tel.: (613) 996-0905, e-mail: pcm@dfait-maeci.gc.ca or Gordon Platt, Canada Council for the Arts, Writing and Publishing Section: (613) 566-4414 ext. 5570, e-mail: gordon.platt@canadacouncil.ca *

(For the unabridged version and a list of major opportunities, see www.infoexport.gc.ca/canadexport and click on "Roadmap to China and Hong Kong".)

The Canadian booth at the ninth **Beijing International Book Fair** — the biggest event of its kind in China — was a textbook case of a cooperative venture. Working together to create a strong Canadian presence, the Canadian Embassy in Beijing and the Canada Council for the Arts (CCA) showcased some of Canada's finest literary works.

The fair is organized each year by the China National Publications Import Export Co. (CNPIEC) (www.cnpiiec.com.cn) and China Universal Press & Publications, with strong support from the Chinese government. Held May 24-28, 2002, the popular event drew crowds that exceeded even the organizers' great expectations: representatives from 500 overseas publishers, 900 exhibitors (both Chinese and foreign), and a grand total of 75,000 Chinese book industry buyers attended. With China having recently joined the WTO, and with a burgeoning and literate middle class, the Chinese publishing industry is eager to translate foreign titles and to find publishing partners.

New beginnings

The Canadian Embassy partnered with the Canada Council for the Arts (CCA) (www.canadacouncil.ca) for this project, and worked to establish a "brand" around Canada's writers who have been very successful in Europe.

The Embassy's contribution consisted of logistical support and liaison with the Chinese organizers. As well, it supplied 50 Chinese translations of Canadian novels from its own collection. For its part, CCA organized and funded the booth, and provided 200 titles, mainly Canadian English and French literature. Louise Mongeau of the Montreal-based children's book publisher **La Courte Échelle** was invited, and a children's section was created for her, enabling her to meet with old partners and new prospects. La Courte Échelle has sold rights to 50 books into Chinese.