



Aboriginal International Business

BRINGING TRADITION AND INNOVATION INTO THE GLOBAL MARKETPLACE

Since our summer 2000 supplement entitled *Aboriginal Export Success, Much more than Arts and Crafts*, success stories have continued to pour in, confirming that aboriginal businesses are major players in the international marketplace. Agriculture and food companies exhibited at ANUGA and SIAL, the two largest agri-food trade shows in the world. Igloodik Isuma Productions, a Nunavut company, won the prestigious Caméra d'Or prize at the 2001 Cannes Festival in France with their aboriginal-language film *Atanarjuat* (The Fast Runner). Kitsaki Meats Limited Partnership was one of six Canadian companies that won the 2001 Canadian Export Award, as well as a special achievement award. Kitsaki Meats is known for a lot more than just its meat products. In fact, Kitsaki has become the world's largest and most successful producer and supplier of organic wild rice, selling throughout North America, Germany, Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

The World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) all have projects that involve Canada's indigenous peoples. Canadian aboriginal know-how and expertise are needed in the areas of traditional knowledge, governance, dispute resolution, land management, community health and community justice, as well as economic and business development. Meadow Lake Tribal Council is managing a \$3-million CIDA-funded social development project with indigenous communities in Nicaragua. The Inuit Circumpolar Conference Canada is the executing agency for two major international development projects aimed at the transfer of Inuit experience and skills to indigenous partners in Belize and Russia.

In August, 27 aboriginal businesses and business organizations participated in an export-education mission organized by the Canadian Consulate General in Minneapolis. The mission members also participated in the Native American Business Alliance (NABA) Convention.

The Assembly of First Nations, in collaboration with Métis and Inuit organizations, organized the Indigenous Peoples Summit of the Americas in Ottawa in March. The indigenous leaders of the Americas developed recommendations regarding the Summit's mandates that were of specific interest to indigenous peoples. These recommendations were then shared with the leaders at the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City in April.

The number of aboriginal firms that are registered with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's World Information Network (WIN) database has increased from 165 to 425. This includes aboriginal businesses in information technology, agriculture, food and beverage, environmental consulting, oil and gas, forestry, sporting goods, tourism and the cultural industries, to name just a few sectors.

ABORIGINAL INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

WORKING FOR YOU IN CANADA AND AROUND THE WORLD

MANDATE

The Aboriginal International Business Development (AIBD) committee's mandate is to promote aboriginal export-market development and access to world markets.

OBJECTIVES

- to facilitate access and use of available relevant government programs and services by the aboriginal business community;
- to ensure that export-development services respond to the identified needs of aboriginal small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);
- to address the need for training and skills development to increase the number of export-prepared and exporting aboriginal firms;

- to increase the level of participation by aboriginal firms in trade activities and to develop special initiatives to take advantage of unique international business opportunities and challenges;

- to integrate and co-ordinate the participation of Team Canada Inc. partners providing programs and services to the aboriginal business community; and
- to identify exporting and export-prepared aboriginal SMEs for inclusion in the WIN Exports database.

The AIBD is an intergovernmental committee with 29 members. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Aboriginal Business Canada are co-chairs.

The Aboriginal International Business Development (AIBD) committee, which consists of 29 federal government departments and agencies, continues to work together to support the aboriginal business community in their international business endeavours. Many of the initiatives mentioned in this supplement were made possible with the support of the AIBD members working together and sharing resources.

Prepared by the Export Services for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Division (TSME)