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one-fifth of Canada's 20,000 Aboriginal entrepreneurs are exporting," said Minister Pettigrew in his address to an audience of invited guests that included representatives of Aboriginal associations, members of parliament, senators, business people, and foreign diplomats.

Sharing success stories

During the launch ceremony, the heads of three Aboriginal-owned companies shared their export success stories. Bob Dickson, Executive Director of **Niigon Technologies Ltd.** (www.niigon.com/), located in Moose Deer Point First Nations in Ontario, described how his successful world-class injection moulding facility won contracts to supply the U.S. automotive industry.

The success of **APC Environmental Inc.** (www.abo-peoples.org/affiliates/nbapc.html), an Aboriginal majority-owned joint venture, depends on its First Nations employees' innate knowledge of the land, as well as on the technical expertise of its non-Aboriginal partner. Betty Ann Lavallee, President of the Fredericton-based company, told the audience that APC has the international rights to a unique, and proven, proprietary technology for soil remediation.

Plastic Rotational Containers Ltd., located in Crossfield, Alberta, designs and manufactures custom-made plastic containers for agricultural industries, ventilation systems, and water filtration and handling — a technology highly regarded in developing countries. The company has established a manufacturing plant in Bangladesh, and company president Joanne Penner (e-mail: penner@telusplanet.net) has just been named to the SME Advisory Board on International Trade.

Sharing the spotlight

The mood was indeed celebratory as Siqiniup Qilauta (The Sun's Drum) (www.ontarioinuit.ca/drum.htm), a delightful young group of Inuit per-

formers, entertained the audience with traditional and contemporary songs, a drum dance — and "throat singing".

Minister Pettigrew shared the spotlight with chef Arnold Olson, of the Cree First Nation in northern Saskatchewan. Olson, a World Culinary Olympics Gold Medalist, introduced the audience to bannock, a delicious flat bread, served with wild blueberry and Saskatoon berry jam from **Aliments Toka Foods**.

To order a copy of the **Directory**

Winning flavour at food shows Chef Arnold Olson

Visitors to international trade shows used to line up at Canadian pavilions to get a glimpse of Canada's icon — the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. But at the last few international shows, rumours quickly circulated that Canada had brought another national treasure — chef Arnold Olson.

Visitors flocked to the Canadian pavilions at **ANUGA** in Germany, **SIAL** in Montreal, and **Expomin** and **Expogourmand** in Chile, to get a taste of Canada's finest Aboriginal cuisine. At each event, chef Arnold Olson was busy whipping up his renditions of mouth-watering dishes, all the while raising awareness of Aboriginal food and promoting the products of Aboriginal food companies.

Aboriginal Planet

Aboriginal resources from A to Z are available at **Aboriginal Planet** (www.aboriginalplanet.gc.ca), a Web site developed by DFAIT's Aboriginal and Circumpolar Affairs Division. Visitors can explore several sites, including the International Opportunities and Business Centre.



Chef Arnold Olson

Mike Pinder Photography

(in English or French), contact DFAIT Service Desk, tel.: **(613) 944-4000** (Ottawa region) or **1-800-267-8376** (toll free), e-mail: enqserv@dfait-maeci.gc.ca or visit the Aboriginal Planet Web site: www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/aboriginalplanet/business/business-en.asp

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ANUGA 2001

Chef Arnold Olson joined four Aboriginal food product companies to offer visitors a unique taste of Canada in the Aboriginal Pavilion at **ANUGA 2001** in Cologne, Germany.

- **Iroquois Cranberry Growers** (www.iroquoiscranberries.com), located in Ontario's Wahta Mohawk Territory, produces cranberry juice, chutney, jam, vinegar, and syrup, and has recently branched out into eco-tourism.
- **Northern Lights/Kitsaki Meats** (www.ca-northernlights.com) of La Ronge, Saskatchewan, specializes in the production and distribution of dried meat snacks and organic wild rice, harvesting some two million pounds of wild rice each year. The company is a winner of the 2001 Canada Export Award.
- **Kivalliq Arctic Foods/Keewatin Meat & Fish** of Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, processes meat from wild caribou that graze on the pristine land of Nunavut. Their second product line is wild Arctic char.
- Inuit-owned and operated **Nunavik Arctic Foods Inc.** (www.makivik.org) of Kuujuaq, Quebec, is the largest distributor of wild caribou meat in North America. The company's product line includes a variety of delicious pâtés and sauces. ✪

A leader in Europe

Biotech flourishing in Finland

Most Finns are highly receptive to the benefits of biotechnology, with the vast majority (71%) believing that within 20 years their quality of life will be significantly improved as a result of biotechnological advances in the field of medicine. This positive attitude has made biotechnology one of the most promising branches of high technology in Finland, and a significant contributor to the country's overall economy. In the last four years, dozens of hi-tech start-ups have been established, and new ones are springing up monthly.

The rise of the biotechnology industry in Finland is founded on strong public support for medical applications, as well as on considerable life sciences expertise, an advanced infrastructure for conducting research, and improvements in risk financing. Unlike most government officials, however, the Finnish population is wary of agricultural applications of biotechnology.

Market overview

Approximately 10% of biotechnology firms in Europe are Finnish, which makes Finland's biotechnology industry the sixth-largest in Europe. The more than 120 small- and medium-sized biotechnology enterprises operating in Finland employ 4,000 people and produce total sales estimated at \$1.02 billion. (These figures can be doubled if large international pharmaceutical companies operating in Finland are considered.) Finland's biotechnological strengths lie in industrial enzymes, diagnostics, biomaterials and pharmaceuticals. Bio Tie Therapies, one of the first biotech companies established in Finland, specializes in remedies for acute and chronic inflammatory diseases, thrombosis, and cancer.

The Finnish government is supporting the country's knowledge-based industries through significant R&D funding. Efforts to boost biotechnology have

spawned some 180 research groups, 14 biotech graduate schools, and several science parks and biocentres dedicated to biotechnology. These are located mainly in the Helsinki area, Turku, Oulu, Kuopio, and Tampere.



In 2000, Finland spent 3.3% of its GDP on R&D, the second-highest R&D expenditure (as a percentage of GDP) in the world. Most (68%) of this funding originated from private sector sources such as BioFund Management Ltd., which specializes in venture capital and private equity investments in biotechnology companies. Throughout the 1990s, public funding for biotechnology amounted to \$496 million. Large-scale national research and technology programmes run by the Academy of Finland, Tekes (the National Technology Agency), and Sitra (the Finnish National Fund for Research and Development) have been providing significant funding since the 1980s.

The Finnish government encourages cooperation between research organizations, funding organizations and industry. Technology transfers resulting from such cooperation have received recognition in recent assessments of international competitiveness conducted

by the International Institute of Management Development (IMD) and the European Union.

Opportunities

Finland's expertise, combined with its willingness to engage in joint international research projects, has intensified the interest of European and American firms in Finnish biotechnology. This has resulted in increased collaboration between many Finnish biotechnology companies and large multi-nationals.

Market access considerations

Finland is a member of the European Union, hence all products marketed in Finland must first be approved by an EU-notified body of any member state, regardless of the country in which the product will be distributed. The Notified Body in Finland for products classified as medicines is the National Agency for Medicines.

Useful Web sites

- Academy of Finland: www.aka.fi
- BioFund Management Ltd: www.biofund.fi
- Bio Tie Therapies: www.biotie.com
- Finnish Bioindustries: www.finbio.net
- Finnish Customs: www.tulli.fi
- Finnish National Fund for Research and Development [Sitra]: www.sitra.fi
- Invest in Finland Bureau: www.investinfinland.fi
- National Agency for Medicines: www.nam.fi
- National Technology Agency [Tekes]: www.tekes.fi

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