

supply equipment particularly suited to the large scale farming regions of the world. Now, we're not only exporting food-stuffs, we're finding foreign markets for innovative machinery and processes based on Canadian know-how.

For example, Canadian-manufactured specialized farm equipment is now in use in Australia, Africa and the Middle East. Canadian research has developed improved varieties of wheat, early maturing soybeans and corn hybrids, and of course Canola, which is in strong demand in many countries, for edible oil uses. The superior milk producing qualities of our dairy cattle are the result of many years of selective breeding and improved feeding and management practices.

All this, plus our high quality standards produces the "winning combination" -- it has not just happened by accident!

Besides that "quality assurance", what support does the Canadian government offer to importers of Canadian products?

Our government is continually trying to increase the scope of Canada's foreign commercial relations. The Department of External Affairs has almost 500 trade commissioners stationed in embassies and consulates around the world and in Ottawa. These officers and their staff are in constant touch with potential Canadian suppliers and they can provide potential importers with full details on availability of Canadian agricultural products. Through these same officers we are continually organizing marketing missions and trade shows to introduce local importers and consumers to Canadian exporters and their products.

Our trade commissioners can assist buyers wishing to visit Canada and organize meetings with potential



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suppliers in all parts of Canada. Our trade commissioners are only a telephone or a telex away from specialists in Canada who are in regular contact with companies and producers in this sector and maintain comprehensive sourcing lists for all goods and services in the agricultural sector. They also have quick access to companies and research organizations using new process and production technology that may be of interest to foreign buyers.

Are there any priority markets?

All markets are important and we wouldn't want to limit ourselves to any particular ones. So you could say that in principle, our market strategy is to remain competitive in all markets.

But there are naturally some that warrant closer attention than others. The Pacific Rim countries - in particular Japan, South Korea and the People's Republic of China - show great promise. Other significant markets for our agricultural products and technology include Latin America and certain countries in North Africa and the Middle East.

Won't the competition for certain agricultural products increase in the future? How will Canada respond to that?

I am certain that agricultural markets will become more competitive. That process has been going on for some time. Some of the most determined competition will come from developing countries, which are aiming for an increased degree of self-sufficiency in food production. On first glance, that might mean a potential loss of market for us, but this can also mean new markets for Canada. For example, suppose that a country wants to increase its animal production -- it might look to Canada for improved seed varieties for higher crop productivity in forages or grains, to feed the livestock; or for animal genetics -- breeding stock semen or embryos -- to raise the productivity in that sector. We can help in both these areas, and of course with the technology and equipment that completes the "package", we are optimistic that Canada will continue to be a leader in the field of agri-food production and exports in the future. ■