

4.4 Sectoral Initiatives

Canada and Japan have a long history of positive commercial relations that span the full spectrum of economic activity. In a number of sectors, this has led to the creation of public and private sector mechanisms to improve efficiencies, address issues and develop understanding and cooperation. This section provides a selective overview of sectors where active cooperation, in particular between the governments of Canada and Japan, plays an important role in facilitating trade, investment, and science and technology links between our two countries.

Agriculture and Food

Japan is the largest net importer of agricultural products in the world, while Canada is a leading supplier to Japan of a number of products of key agricultural interest, such as meat, grains, oilseeds and seafood. Moreover, the agriculture and food sector is an area of strong partnership between Canada and Japan that serves the needs of producers and consumers.

The broad partnership has led to collaboration on issues of market access between Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, together with the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, and the Food Safety Commission. There have been ad hoc discussions on an ongoing basis, both directly and through our respective embassies. As a result of our constructive relationship, a number of trade irritants have been successfully resolved in a mutually beneficial manner, including most notably the progress achieved in 2005 addressing problems associated with access for Canadian and Japanese beef in each other's markets.

Food safety, which has seen tremendous cooperation over the last two years, is one of the priority areas under the Economic Framework. Given the increase in global food trade, new