

RED MEAT

As a leading producer and exporter of red meat, Canada continues to develop new processing technologies, including finished product handling, preservation and packaging. Much research and development in these areas is being conducted through pre-competitive, collaborative programs, some of which are supported through the direct participation of industry associations in support of industry-wide objectives.

Because of the importance of the red meat industry, the federal government has established several specialized meat research centres. As an example, the Lacombe Research Centre in Alberta is active in developing new cattle feeding regimes and new methods of carcass grading to improve processing yields, new preservation methods and new packaging technologies. This work is complemented by research in pork production and processing, including detection of genetic factors affecting production of quality meat.

A REPUTATION FOR QUALITY

Canada has an international reputation for high quality foods, beverages and food commodities. The regulatory system which governs food and beverage manufacturing and distribution is one of the cornerstones upon which this reputation has been built. It provides consumers in both Canada and other countries with the assurance that Canadian-processed foods are of high quality, safe and fully in compliance with the ingredient and nutritional profiles indicated on product packaging and labelling.

The benefit of this national system of food safety and quality assurance is reflected in the high level of consumer confidence shown toward the foods sold in Canada. Canada's National Institute of Nutrition surveyed Canadian consumers and found that a majority of them believes that food sold in retail supermarkets is safe. Moreover, the level of consumer confidence displayed in Canada is actually higher than it is in either the United States or Mexico.

Canada's federal government fully recognizes that regulations governing industry behaviour must serve the public interest at the same time as they foster international competitiveness.

Although this quality assurance system is stringent, it is not an impediment to manufacturers of processed foods in Canada. Rather, it is an underlying reason for the international success of Canada's food industry and serves to ensure global market access for Canadian food and beverage products in the future.

Most importantly, Canadian processed food and beverage products are winning international recognition by consumers and food service industries in other countries. Canadian food and beverage products are frequently accorded the highest awards at international food trade fairs such as SIAL. In recent years, Canadian wines, beers,

processed vegetables, biscuits and prepared vegetarian foods have all taken top prizes. Five Canadian food processors won a SIAL d'OR at the 1994 SIAL event. Supreme Produce Inc. of Calgary won a SIAL d'OR for its prepackaged fresh vegetables for a stir fry, General Mills Canada of Toronto for its dried fruit snacks, Yves Veggie Cuisine of Vancouver for its "meatless" vegetarian pepperoni, Loblaw's International Brands of

“Agropur's plant in Notre-Dame-du-Bon-Conseil, Quebec, has obtained ISO-9002 certification. Agropur becomes the first dairy processor in North America to obtain ISO 9002 registration from the International Organization for Standardization, whose members include Canada and about 100 other countries”

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