

## 5. EXPORT MARKETING STRATEGY

### *Focused Market Priorities*

A longer-term marketing strategy, taking into account shifting market demand, new competitors or demographic changes, is essential to international success. The US market for Canadian live lobster has long established roots and accounts for 80 % of Canadian exports of live lobster. Demand for live and processed lobster in Japan and the EC countries also offer significant opportunities for expansion. However, this does not preclude the need to pursue other markets which have the potential for development. Live lobster requires efficient and reliable transportation with suitable holding tanks and storage facilities that requires significant capital investment.

### *Generic Market Promotion*

The question of a Canadian generic marketing approach frequently arises since most Canadian lobster entering the US is absorbed as 'Maine lobster' and may be re-exported as a US product. The establishment of a Canadian generic image for exports to Japan and the EC countries will require a significant additional commitment to promotional efforts aimed at both the consumer and hotel, restaurant and the institution trade. This will create a distinctive image for Canadian products and establish customer-brand and product recognition and loyalty.

### *Quality Image*

To enhance the quality image of Canadian lobster products a promotional programme developed in consultation with CALPA and the provincial governments is required. The programme should feature the existing Quality Management Plan (QMP) encompassing all phases of production, processing and delivery to market. Additionally, good video material and promotional aids are needed to feature the environmental and food safety attributes of Canadian lobster. The promotional programme should be flexible.

### *Improve the Delivery of Market Intelligence*

Industry has indicated a need for better and more timely commercial information and intelligence on developments and sales opportunities in foreign markets. More government effort is to be targeted at providing the private sector, directly and through industry associations, with information on market conditions, consumption trends, market access factors, distribution channels, and business contacts with respect to lobster in general, industrial species or specific products.

### *Raise the International Profile of Canadian Lobster and Products*

We need to heighten the awareness, through education of consumers, institutions and retailers, that Canada has a good supply of a well managed resource of consistently high quality lobster. Broadened sector participation in strategically selected international events, such as seafood trade shows, trade missions, seminars and conferences, should be pursued to improve industry's global presence and market share. We also need to improve the visibility of Canadian lobster at the retail level with attention to packaging and point-of-purchase material as well as dispel perceptions of lobster as a luxury product.

### *Funding Mechanism*

Strong and securely financed associations are key. Consideration will need to be given to stimulate the adoption of funding mechanisms, such as levies or check-offs to support marketing initiatives.

### *Partnerships*

The success of the promotional plan will depend on cooperation between federal government departments and agencies such as EAITC, FAO, ACOA as well as CALPA and the provincial governments to ensure that our collective efforts are complimentary and consistent in facilitating the lead taken by industry. This programme must be factored into the International Trade Business Plan.