
There was not necessarily a conscious decision to penetrate a country on speculation. Often the genesis of exports was a hard opportunity. Familiarity with the country helped.

"One rarely says I am going after the Pacific Northwest. More likely you see the retailers in the market and you go after it."

Given that export markets were driven by hard opportunity and familiarity, it came as no surprise that the U.S. market was considered to be the most important one for all sectors. This was due to a number of factors including common language, familiarity, size of the market, proximity and relative ease of entry. In fact, the Fish and Seafood participants said they treated the U.S. like a domestic market.

However, many participants noted that the markets in Mexico, Latin America, South America and the Pacific rim were of great interest as well. Many participants considered them to be an emerging market that might be more receptive to Canadian products than other traditional global markets like Europe. Many participants felt that more information on this geographic area in the GMORs would be useful.

All of the sectors agreed that the Canadian market was not big enough to support them. Many felt the Canadian market was either static or shrinking. Participants agreed that exports are a substantial part of business. They believed that they must export to grow. For some (e.g., Fish and Seafood and Lobster), they must export to survive.

2.3 Departmental Role

In general, participants saw the role of the Department as making exports easier for their industry. Many participants saw this as tackling trade barriers. For the pork industry, it meant harmonizing inspections; for the apparel and aircraft repair and overhaul industries, it meant doing something about the delays in cross-border shipments.

Many participants recognized and supported the Department in organizing trade missions and trade fairs. For many of them (e.g., Packaging and Labelling Equipment) this was their primary source of export information.

Many participants felt that another departmental role was the gathering and disseminating of trade information. However, it quickly became apparent in many groups that dissemination of information was not the Department's strong suit. One person summed the Department up by