

New nickel dollar honours Jacques Cartier



Actor Marc Blais, dressed as Jacques Cartier, holds a replica of the new nickel dollar coin issued to honour Cartier's 1534 voyage to Canada. The new coin will be available in mid-June.

A unique commemorative coin minted in honour of Jacques Cartier's first voyage to Canada in 1534 was announced recently by Charles Lapointe, Minister of Supply and Services and Minister responsible for the Royal Canadian Mint. The first of these commemorative nickel dollars will be available in mid-June from financial institutions across Canada.

The new coin depicts the landing of Jacques Cartier at Gaspé, Quebec on July 24, 1534. In the centre of the coin is a three-quarters view of the explorer on the shore at Gaspé, holding a sword in his right hand. Two of his men are seen standing behind the explorer, one on each side. Directly behind Cartier is a representation of the large cross he put up at Gaspé.

Flanking Cartier and his men in the

background are two of his three sailing ships. A banner across the bottom of the coin reads "1534 Jacques Cartier 1984."

On the obverse of the coin is the image of Queen Elizabeth II.

The Cartier dollar will be distributed across the country through banks, trust companies and, in Quebec, caisses populaires. Like the Constitution dollar, issued in 1982, they will be available at face value. A mintage of at least five million is scheduled and more will be produced if the demand warrants.

According to Murray Church, public relations chief for the Royal Canadian Mint, a collector version of the coin with a specially-polished surface and housed in a custom case will be offered to collectors next fall. It is expected to sell for about \$10.

No-soil grass takes root

A box car-size hydroponic farm that can grow 1 200 kilograms of grass every day has been developed by a small horticultural firm in Langley, B.C. — and the first unit has been sold to Saudi Arabia.

Bob Potter, 30, president of Canadian Livegrass Inc., said the \$60 000 module was bought by the Saudi Arabian government for use on an experimental farm near Jeddah on the Red Sea. If the first unit meets expectations, the Saudis have agreed to buy

40 more over the next two years.

The hydroponic farm is a box measuring 11.5 metres by 3 metres by 3 metres with one small window. It uses 36 high-intensity grow lights and a mixture of water, nutrients and chemicals to grow grass from barley seed. The grass is grown in 648 stacked seed beds at the rate of more than 25.4 millimetres a day. About 1 000 litres of water and 4.5 litres of chemicals are needed daily for the process.

Mr. Potter explained that it takes eight days from the time the seed is germinated

to grow grass 25 centimetres high. "After that you can harvest one rack weighing 1 200 kilos every day."

It took two years for Mr. Potter, a native of Britain, to develop the hydroponic farm and he predicts that Western Canadian cattle ranchers and dairy and sheep farmers will become his biggest customers.

"This unit can replace 20 acres of pasture and feed 25 cows a day," he said. "It allows a farmer to save on machinery and use grazing land for other cash crops." The unit also produces grass in the middle of winter, he added, which may cut the need for large storage silos.

While the domestic market lies fallow, Mr. Potter and University of British Columbia horticulturist Gary Hunt will visit Saudi Arabia to set up the first unit. If testing is successful, the remaining units will be manufactured in Langley and assembled in Saudi Arabia.

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Financing agreements support \$7-million in Canadian sales

The Export Development Corporation (EDC) has signed five financing agreements totalling \$7.0-million to support sales of Canadian capital goods to Trinidad and Tobago, Gabon, Mexico and Israel.

The agreements are:

- A \$ 3.5-million (US) disbursement agreement to support a sale of private automatic branch exchanges (PABXs) to the Trinidad and Tobago Telephone Company, Limited (TELCO) by Mitel Corporation of Kanata, Ontario;
- A \$ 1.8-million (US) financing agreement to support the sale of the turnkey construction of a day care centre in Port Gentil, Gabon, by Mandepa-Vican Inc. of Victoriaville, Quebec;
- A \$ 1.046-million (US) allocation under a line of credit agreement with Comision Federal de Electricidad of Mexico to support a sale of motor-operated forged steel valves for thermo-electric power stations by Velan Inc. of St. Laurent, Quebec;
- A \$ 552 262 (US) allocation under a line of credit agreement with Bank Leumi Le-Israel B.M. to support a sale of injection molding equipment to Tempo Soft Drinks Company Ltd. of Holon, Israel by Husky Injection Molding Systems Ltd. of Bolton, Ontario;
- A \$ 32 207 (US) allocation under a line of credit agreement with the United Mizrahi Bank Limited of Tel Aviv, Israel, to support the sale of distillation tower internals to Dor Chemicals Ltd. of Haifa, Israel, by Glitsch Canada Ltd. of Uxbridge, Ontario.