

Reeling in a big market

Canadian fish and seafood in the U.K.

Given the British population's traditional love of fish, it's hardly surprising that the United Kingdom is Canada's most valuable outlet for fish and seafood within the EU. The British market, however, remains a curious mixture of tradition and innovation. Canned salmon remains a favorite with consumers, yet innovation in the form of new and creative products appears to be driving retail growth.

Billingsgate, London's wholesale fish market, now features a dizzying array of species that would have been ignored 20 years ago by the average Briton. Some of these fish species are now moving well beyond the more limited ethnic market to land in British restaurants, where half of all fish consumption in Britain takes place. Farmed and organic fish species from around the world are also ending up on more plates in London's trendier and more innovative restaurants.

Five major supermarket chains handle more than half of the retail sales of fish in the U.K., and innovative products are now in demand. The popularity of frozen fish has lessened as British consumers embrace new products such as

chilled fish and seafood-based "ready meals". Salmon, cod, haddock and shrimp top the average consumer's shopping list for fish, with salmon — now plentiful thanks to aquaculture — ranked number one at the fresh or chilled counter. Sales for chilled products have risen 22% in the last year.

British hooked on Canadian fish Canada has a long history of selling fish to the U.K., where canned salmon continues to be our biggest selling seafood item. (The U.K. is Canada's biggest customer worldwide for canned salmon.) Although cod remains king with British consumers, they also love cold-water shrimp, cooked and peeled. Indeed, they consume about half of the world's production. Small wonder

then that so much of Canada's East Coast supply of cooked and peeled shrimp is now exported to the U.K. A word of caution however: low world prices, coupled with high duties on the Canadian product, have introduced certain marketing challenges.

The British restaurant trade is also an important destination for other high-value Canadian delicacies such as live lobster, in-shell shrimp, fresh Pacific halibut, snow crab and, more recently, salmon roe for the growing sushi business. Belgo's, London's premier outlet for mussels, now offers Canadian mussels in season.

Canadian food service suppliers are advised to work with specialist importers. Retail suppliers are also advised that the most common route to the market is by selling to a manufacturer or a specialist importer.

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Janet Farmer will be attending the **European Seafood Exposition (www.euroseafood.com)** in Brussels, **April 23-25, 2002**, where she can be contacted via the Canada pavilion. *

The Netherlands

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several large-scale "Vinex" housing developments.

Commercial/industrial building has grown substantially in recent years, although at a declining rate: 11.2% in 1999, 4.7% in 2000 and 2.5% in 2001. However, this type of construction is expected to decline in the coming period by 1.4% in 2002 and 3% in the years thereafter. The decline in new housing starts is expected to be compensated by increasing demand for renovation and maintenance work.

Useful Web sites

- Netherlands Association of Timber Agents (NATA): www.nata-timberagents.nl
- Centrum Hout (wood promotion organization): www.centrum-hout.nl
- Keurhout Foundation: www.stichtingkeurhout.nl
- H.I.B.I.N. (building materials organization): www.hibin.nl
- Cobouw (leading daily for the building sector): www.cobouw.nl

- Bowbeurs (main national building products fair; next show February 2003): www.bouwbeurs.nl

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EDC launches new on-line credit risk management tools

Canadian exporters can now use the Internet to purchase credit information about their foreign buyers and accounts receivable insurance from Export Development Canada (EDC) (www.edc.ca) — quickly and securely — with two new fully automated on-line products.

EXPORT Check and EXPORT Protect are EDC's first fully automated trade finance products.

Using EXPORT Check, a Canadian company can quickly determine a buyer's credit profile before closing an export deal by accessing a database of more than 64 million buyers in more than 100 markets. Customers receive an EDC Insurability Opinion

which provides information on EDC's experience and history with the company as well as EDC's recommendation regarding the foreign buyer's insurability. Customers also have the option to purchase a *Business Information Report* from Dun & Bradstreet which provides detailed credit information.

EXPORT Protect allows Canadian companies to insure their foreign accounts receivable against non-payment on a single transaction up to US\$250,000. Customers will learn within minutes if EDC can put the coverage in place and protect them against 90% of a loss should their foreign buyer fail to pay. Single transaction coverage is available exclusively on-line through EXPORT Protect.



FITT Conference

OTTAWA — June 9-10, 2002 — Anyone interested in international trade is invited to join the fifth annual **Forum for International Trade Training Conference (FITT)** entitled "Set Your Sights on the World: Strategies and Networks". Program highlights include networking receptions, workshops and

exhibits by Team Canada Inc, Export Development Canada and the Business Development Bank of Canada. Attending FITT is an excellent way to gain access to key decision makers from both business and government. As well, FITT provides the opportunity for companies to display their products and services to a highly targeted audience.

Making Trade Shows Work

Barry Siskind, North America's foremost trade and consumer show expert and author of *The Power of Exhibit Marketing*, is once again offering "Making Trade Shows Work", Canada's only comprehensive full-day workshop. It will be given in several major cities across Canada. Mention

"EDC continues to broaden its product offering to help Canadian companies better manage the risks of international business," says EDC President and CEO A. Ian Gillespie. "With the launch of EXPORT Check and EXPORT Protect, Canadian exporters can now get key credit information and insurability reports on potential buyers and accounts receivable insurance faster than ever."

EXPORT Check and EXPORT Protect have been designed exclusively for the Internet and require payment by credit card. For more information about EDC's Internet products, visit www.edc.ca/online

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Web site: www.edc.ca *

Integrity Workshops

ACROSS CANADA — April 12-May 24, 2002 — Export Development Canada (EDC) (www.edc.ca) is a lead sponsor of this series of cross-Canada workshops presented by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters. See details in our previous issue, p. 13. *

For more information, visit the conference Web site www.fitt.ca/conference/2002 or contact the conference organizers directly, tel.: **(819) 827-5168**, e-mail: conference@fitt.ca *