

I would like to talk first about technology because it is the thread which ties all the other components together.

Technology can be new and novel ways to produce and prepare the product: by vacuum pack, by freezing, by packaging and presentation. Technology can mean better market intelligence through the use of well integrated, and shared, communications systems incorporating computers, facsimiles, voice-mail ordering systems and satellite communications.

Technology can also mean research and development in the creation of unique and useful consumer products. Such R&D can ensure Canadian processors maintain and improve quality control, and improve control of both the product supply cost and the market price of the finished product.

Technology can also mean the Fisheries Council's own Parasite Detection Equipment development project. The success of this project will benefit the entire industry through the transfer of equipment and the enhanced quality of your product.

Application of new technology in any industry requires a renewed focus on skills training. This is equally true in your industry which faces the twin challenge of enhancing both labour and management education.

Since meeting technological change is a shared challenge, perhaps different parts of the industry can work together on mutually beneficial projects. This is one of many areas in which management and labour co-operation can pay important dividends. Equally, the opportunities for joint industry projects and networking in this area can reinforce a co-operative approach to international marketing and other shared challenges.

Such joint industry co-operation lead to the success of the ISTC-sponsored technical mission to Europe last spring. This mission drew together a group of specialists from different parts of Canada, each with experience in different scientific and technical fields in the fishery and fish products industries. The group visited various research and development institutes, fish processing plants and equipment manufacturers. They found that many European countries had a more comprehensive, better-funded system for research and development than we have. And they found that funding and participation by industry in these systems was considerably higher than here at home. They also found processing technology was more advanced, with innovations more quickly adapted by their industry than ours.

I think the lesson is clear. In the past, your industry has established itself firmly in the marketplace. However, this past record is no guarantee of future success -- we have to keep up