

INTRODUCTION

The First Canadian Lobster Conference was held at Canada House, London, England on October 10, 1989. The purpose of the conference was to inform the UK trade of the supply potential, quality and versatility of Canadian lobster products. This should help stimulate demand for Canadian lobster in the United Kingdom at a time of abundant supplies in Canada. Currently, the UK is a relatively small market for lobster with exports of about \$4 million in 1988. However, this represents an increase of 30 per cent over 1987.

The conference was the result of close collaboration between the Canadian High Commission, External Affairs and International Trade Canada (EAITC) and the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. A conference format followed by a taste testing was chosen as the most straight forward way to inform the assembled importers, caterers, restaurateurs and food press of the qualities and availability of Canadian lobster. The event attracted 90 knowledgeable participants. The Minister of International Trade, Hon. John C. Crosbie, who was in London on other business made a brief address to the gathering.

The presentations were well received. There were factual, timely and stimulated a lively discussion. Participants noted that the conference provided an opportunity for a full discussion of the Canada/UK lobster trade. A demonstration by P.E.I. chef Hans Anderegg on the handling of lobster was also a major feature. He also helped the caterer prepare the lobster tasting which followed the formal meeting.

The purpose of the tasting was to demonstrate the wide variety of lobster products available from Canada and to highlight the versatility of both live and frozen lobster in menu preparation. Delegates were presented with a formal display table of four dishes illustrating different catering uses of lobster. A range of prepared hot and cold dishes and a display of lobster products rounded out the presentation. A selection of lobster finger food was also offered along with premium Canadian wine and champagne. The emphasis of the tasting was on the uniqueness of lobster as a luxury food product and a product with a diversity of applications to meet demand from consumers for more exotic and upscale foods.