



# communiqué

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## MAJOR CANADIAN EXHIBITION IN JAPANESE FOOD FAIR

The Honourable Ed Lumley, Minister of International Trade, announced in Tokyo March 19 that the more than 35 Canadian businessmen and representatives from trade associations who participated in Foodex laid a strong basis for increased future sales, by confirming Canada's reputation as a supplier of high quality Canadian food products.

Foodex is the largest food show in Asia and attracts approximately 100,000 trade visitors. This is the first time Canada has participated in this fair, but as Minister Lumley observed, "based on the enthusiasm of both the Canadian exhibitors and the Japanese trade, it certainly won't be the last."

Japan is the second largest market for Canada's agricultural and food exports, accounting for annual sales of \$1.5 billion. Given the dimensions of this trade, Mr. Lumley stated that, "it is extremely important to demonstrate Canada as an important supplier of quality food products and participation in the Foodex show is the best vehicle by which to accomplish this objective". While the large majority of Canada's food exports to Japan is primary agricultural and fishery products, Foodex provides an excellent opportunity for Canadian firms to display the broad range of processed food products available from Canada.

The well-designed Canadian exhibit, which simulated a Canadian supermarket, was a real "show stopper". Visitors commented that it was the most attractive of the 17 national exhibits on the site. A new approach was used at the Canadian exhibit. Firms participating under the umbrella of 5 key trade

associations, the National Dairy Council of Canada, the Association of Canadian Distillers, the Canadian Meat Council, the Fisheries Council of Canada and the Canadian Food Processors Association. Mr. Lumley said, "The objective was to demonstrate to the Japanese trade the capability of the Canadian food industry to supply a full range of processed food products."

Canadian participants were very encouraged by the favourable response by the Japanese trade and many important contacts were made during the five-day show. Mr. Lumley said that it would now be the responsibility of industry representatives and agents "to pursue vigorously the trade opportunities which have been identified."

One Canadian exhibitor, Harvey Wright, Executive Director of the British Columbia Seafood Exporters Association, said, "The attention received by the Canadian fish display was fantastic. For example, the Chairman of a Japanese trade association representing 25,000 sushi bars has requested samples of Canadian fish for a major presentation to his members". Another participant, Mr. Alex Moores of Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, representing the Canadian Association of Fish Exporters, confirmed that this exposure at Foodex will enable Canadian fish companies to expand sales of fish already popular in the Japanese market, and develop exports of additional varieties of Canadian fish.

The acceptance of Canadian quality beef was indicated by the fact that the special show quota was sold out in two hours. The show also afforded an opportunity to enhance the already strong image of Canadian pork products. Members of the Canadian Meat Council also displayed a variety of processed meat products which generated much enthusiasm and interest on the part of Japanese buyers.

"Many visitors were impressed by the light flavour of Canadian whisky", said Mr. Alex Bell, representing the Association of Canadian Distillers. Canadian cheese, unknown in Japan, was extremely well received according to Dale Tulloch of the National Dairy Council of Canada. "In fact", he said, "we have received over 75 serious inquiries to sell our products in Japan". Elmer Banting of the Canadian Food Processors Association was pleased by the number of inquiries received by the 12 companies represented.