



ALBERTA COMPANIES PARTICIPATE IN SALON DE GOURMETS IN SPAIN

Four Alberta food companies participated at *Salón de Gourmets* in Madrid, Spain from April 24 -27, 2017. Companies included Kinnikinnick Foods, Byblos Bakery, Canadian Rocky Mountain Beef and Wild Rose Holdings. *Salón de Gourmets* is one of the largest food shows in Europe with over 85,000 Spanish and international visitors every year. Spain is the fifth largest market in the EU and the eleventh largest importer of agri-food and seafood products in the world. This year Canada was granted a prominent location for its pavilion and named Country of Honour in recognition of its 150th anniversary and the recently signed Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement. The Canadian pavilion, developed in partnership with Alberta Agriculture and Forestry as well as its government partners, consisted of 11 exhibiting Canadian companies and included a space for show cooking sessions and tasting events where Canadian Angus beef and bison were profiled.

Complementing the trade show program was a briefing by the Trade Commissioner Service in Spain as well as market tours and a business-to-business meeting program for the Canadian companies with potential Spanish buyers and distributors. Participation provided Alberta companies market intelligence and exposure among international and local buyers attending the show, while increasing their understanding of the Spanish marketplace.



Cooking demonstration



Canada Pavilion

Canada's Ambassador to Spain, Matthew Levin, along with Spain's Minister of Agriculture, Isabel García Tejerina, participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the opening of the Canadian pavilion which garnered a substantial media presence. The program also included several cooking and tasting events highlighting the quality of Canada's gourmet products; such as Canadian lobster, scallops, Black Angus beef, bison meat, ice wines and ice ciders, craft beers, spirits (whisky, gins), gluten-free products, confectionary and maple syrup products.

Initial feedback from participating companies has been very positive. Companies noted the large number of companies and countries represented and the diverse products showcased at *Salón de Gourmets* and commented that the experience provided some excellent ideas for new flavours and packaging. Further remarks noted the numerous meetings with distributors and buyers and the opportunity for furthering business relationships.

About the Spanish market:

- Spain is the fifth largest economy in the European Union (EU) with a fast growing economy. Spain's agri-food imports from Canada have been increasing at a double-digit rate in comparison to Spain's imports from most partner countries.

- Spain's food market of over 46 million people is attractive given the diversity of tastes and increasingly busy lifestyles. Furthermore, the country's annual influx of around 50 million tourists makes for a thriving food service industry (tourism continues to trend upwards).
- These trends present good opportunities for Canadian exporters looking to enter the Spanish marketplace. Specifically, market opportunities for Canadian companies in Spain are related to consumer-oriented products: gourmet products, organic, low fat, nutraceuticals, functional ingredients, "all-free" (sugar free, gluten free, lactose free, etc.). Pulses are also an integral part of the Mediterranean diet. There is an increased interest for bison and other Canadian meats.
- The Comprehensive European Trade Agreement has been signed and will be implemented in 2017. The agreement is expected to remove 98 per cent of EU tariffs on Canadian agricultural products. The opportunities for Alberta companies are expanding, therefore companies need to create a presence in the market now to increase awareness of their products.

Paola Zaragoza
Manager, Americas and Europe
Alberta Agriculture and Forestry
Tel: 780-638-3831
E-mail: paola.zaragoza@gov.ab.ca