

EXPORT TO CANADA NEWS

INFORMATION · ADVICE · CONTACT

FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



IN THIS ISSUE

1. MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
2. FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES MARKET IN CANADA
3. POSITIVE OUTLOOK FOR ICT SERVICES IN CANADA
4. PROGRAM UPDATES
5. SPOTLIGHT ON TFO CANADA ACTIVITIES
6. KALAA ORGANICS: A NEW ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY BRAND

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



STEVE TIPMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
TFO CANADA

An eye to the future

As TFO Canada's fiscal year comes to a close on March 31, 2023, it is typically the time when we look towards future plans and activities. Since we are now embarking on the final phase of our five -year strategic plan, reflections are going beyond next year.

With the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic seemingly behind us, global trade is very challenging, with a number of issues being top of mind for both exporters and importers. The "new normal" has presented a whole set of new challenges for traders such as global inflation, logistics costs and the availability of shipping containers, the war in Ukraine and climate events in different parts of the world.

As a Non-Government Organization that works at the nexus of trade and development with the mission of improving lives through the creation of sustainable trade partnerships for exporters from developing countries with Canadian and foreign buyers, TFO Canada has observed several trends that will be taken into consideration as we chart our next strategic plan.

As we move into a post-pandemic world, we need to recognize the important role that trade-led development will play when it comes to the economic recovery of developing and emerging economies. Furthermore, given TFO Canada's role of working with both exporters and importers, we take note of "Canada's Private Sector Engagement for Sustainable Development Strategy" since it presents an approach to broaden and deepen Global Affairs Canada's engagement with the private sector. Another trend that accelerated during COVID-19 was the emphasis placed on digital trade and the tools traders need to master. We also note that, as countries increase their commitments towards environmental protection and reducing carbon emissions, strategies around trade and the environment continue to gain in importance.

While some of these trends are not necessarily new, we believe they will inform important elements of our strategy going forward. It is also worth noting that other aspects such as gender equality and women's economic empowerment will continue to be fundamentally important to our work.

We look forward to working with all of you in the coming years.



Tipman's Trade Tip

When exporting fresh fruit and vegetables, understanding preferential tariffs and how they apply can influence your competitive advantage (or disadvantage) in Canada. It is important that you pay close attention to the basics when it comes to customs procedures, which includes your export documentation. It is critically important to be familiar with Canadian customs procedures. Mistakes can result in delays, additional costs or even spoiled product.

TFO Canada is pleased to announce the release of an updated market information paper (MIP) in the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables sector. The full guide is available on our website in English. The French and Spanish versions will be available in April. In addition, a new MIP on the Information Communication and Technology (ICT) Services sector has been published and is available in all three languages. Please ensure you are [registered](#) with us to access the full documents.

Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Market in Canada

By Mike Mauti, TFO Canada Associate

The 2023 Fruit and Vegetable Market Information Paper developed by the Trade Facilitation Office of Canada (TFO Canada) is a treasure trove of information designed to provide relevant intelligence about the Canadian market for would be exporters in the fresh produce industry operating in TFO Canada member countries. The extensive report focuses on key data points and discusses vital topics, including:



- Extensive Canadian trade data highlighting category opportunities for importers
- Product overviews for commodities frequently grown in TFO Canada member countries
- Trends and opportunities shaping the Canadian marketplace in the 2020's
- An overview of strategies vital for importing success in the Canadian market
- An outline of the primary types of produce buying organizations in Canada

- Trade practices employed by Canadian buyers

Updated frequently, this year's report contains revised data and new content. Readers should be on the lookout for an updated HS code hierarchy. The HS code (stands for harmonized system code) is an international coding system to organize product trade around the world. As it has changed since the last publication, this version has the updated hierarchy. Also new for 2023 are detailed segments on topics relevant to the Canadian produce marketplace. To get the full Canadian experience, importers will need to know how these topics shape the attitudes of Canadian buyers and impact how they go to market. In the updated report you will find discussions on:

The Impact of COVID-19: When the pandemic began, the market for fresh produce suffered an immediate shock. Traditional shopping habits were replaced by panic buying and long-established processes to replenish supplies hit many roadblocks. After the initial shock, Canadian consumers began to behave differently. In what has been described as a 'flight to safety', Canadians chose products and shopping styles that were perceived to be 'safer', regardless of whether they were related to COVID-19 or not. This section details some of those buying habits and distinguishes between new habits brought on by the pandemic with ones merely accelerated by it.

Gender Equality: It's no secret that the Canadian produce industry was traditionally an old boy's club. A quick walk through a wholesale terminal market or the procurement office at a retail chain would show that it was dominated by men. Even the general public could see in their local grocery store that the produce department was frequently staffed predominately by males. Today however, women are making up a larger portion of the produce industry, not dissimilar to the experience in many other Canadian industries. This section reports on one program that is making a difference in the quest towards gender equality in the Canadian produce industry.

Corporate Social Responsibility: While a discussion of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is not new to this publication, the 2023 edition takes a deeper look at this opportunity for importers. In addition to listing the various organizations supporting CSR initiatives in Canada, this year's publication details some of the more popular initiatives undertaken by Canadian organizations and provides advice on how importers can get involved in their own programs while communicating their efforts to customers. This year's report along with all its new content is vital reading for any fruit or vegetable supplier from TFO Canada member countries interested in doing business in the lucrative Canadian market.

Information Communication and Technology (ICT) Services

Positive outlook for ICT Services market in Canada

By Michelle Hustler, TFO Canada Associate

For many years, Canada has been facing a tech talent shortage. This shortage became even more acute in the wake of the pandemic, which caused many businesses to move online and increased the demand for digital expertise across all industries.

However, the pendulum is now swinging the other way. The increased demand for digital services related to remote working arrangements and the closure of non-essential businesses is reversing with the reopening of in-person spaces. Additionally, high inflation and interest rates have made consumers and businesses more cautious with their spending. Tech industries worldwide, including Canada, are laying off workers.

But is it doom and gloom for Canada's tech sector? According to the Information and Communications Technology Council, while some key digital occupations are seeing a reduction in employment levels compared to earlier peaks, there are still plenty of unfilled jobs in the sector. In fact, several key digital occupations remain in excess demand in Canada up to Q3 of 2022 - based on the most recently available information - with job vacancies outnumbering unemployed workers. This includes software developers and interactive media developers. Despite the uncertainty of the short-term, the ICTC remains confident that the medium-term outlook for Canada's digital economy is positive.

TFO Canada is pleased to announce the release of its newest MIP on Canada's tech sector. While the paper was researched and written before the wave of tech layoffs in early 2023, there is no slowing of the global technology trend. Technology has permeated every aspect of our lives and every business. While big tech firms may be on a hiring pause and though spending may have slowed, the number of businesses that need tech support continues to grow. In fact, this may be a good time for SMEs in TFO Canada partner countries to look at the Canadian market and assess how they can offer lower cost tech alternatives to companies, particularly smaller tech companies that consistently find it difficult to attract and retain talent.

Specifically, the paper looks at four key tech and digital creative sub-sectors: animation and VFX, video game development, software development, and film and television, exploring demand, trends, market requirements, competition, and market entry strategies. While the paper was researched and written before the wave of tech layoffs in early 2023, there is no slowing of the global technology trend. Technology has permeated every aspect of our lives and every business. While big tech firms may be on a hiring pause and though spending may have slowed, the number of businesses that need tech support continues to grow. In fact, this may be a good time for SMEs in TFO Canada partner countries to look at the Canadian market and assess how they can offer lower cost tech alternatives to companies, particularly smaller tech companies that consistently find it difficult to attract and retain talent.

See the recently updated Market Information Paper on Canada's ICT Sub-sectors available on TFO Canada's website.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Asia and the Middle East

Export Readiness Training

In January 2023, TFO Canada in partnership with Jordan Exporters Association (JEA) provided additional technical training on export readiness, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), digital marketing, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and climate-smart business practices to 22 Jordanian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), 20 of which are women-owned/led, in the cosmetics and processed food sectors.

Market Access - Bangladesh

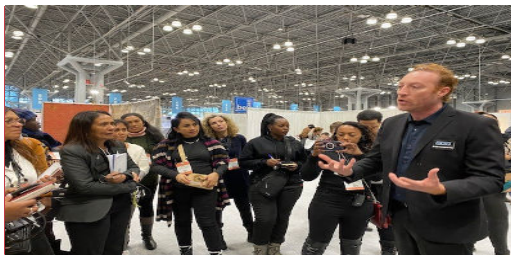
Under the framework of the Women in Trade for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth (WITISG) project, and in partnership with USAID and SME Foundation, 14 SMEs from Bangladesh showcased fashionable and handmade Jute Diversified Products (JDP) to North American buyers from February 5-8, 2023, at the NY NOW Winter Show.

From a selection of 35 products under 12 categories, three Bangladeshi exhibitors made the finalists list for the "Best New Product" award, and TULIKA Eco Ltd. won the award in the 'Artisan Resource' category.



Bangladeshi SMEs at Ny NOW Winter Show 2023

Africa and Haiti



SME delegation in New York

Market Familiarization Tour in New York

Under the framework of the SMO-LUME project, and in partnership with the financial support of the Government of Canada, through Global Affairs Canada, TFO Canada organized a market familiarization tour for 17 women-led small and medium enterprises in the artisan sector. This initiative was implemented in collaboration with Fivondronan'ny Mpandraharaha Malagasy (FIVMPAMA), a Group of Women Entrepreneurs of Madagascar (GFEM), Uganda Women Entrepreneurs Association Limited (UWEAL), Uganda Small Scale Industries Association (USSIA) and the Ministry of Trade Industry and Cooperatives of Uganda. Under the guidance and counseling of experts from Aid to Artisans, the delegation visited NY NOW® and Shoppe Object trade shows, as well as a series of retail stores and facilities.

Export Launchpad Uganda: TFO Canada in partnership with the Uganda Export Promotion Board (UEPB) and the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) launched the Export Readiness Training Manual on March 16, 2023 in Kampala. The training manual will be used to train more than 50 district commercial officers across Uganda – increasing access to more than 100 small and medium-sized enterprises located outside of Kampala in the Agrifoods sectors. The Export Launchpad Uganda is a joint initiative of ITFC, Trade Development Fund, and Global Affairs Canada through the WITISG project.



Export Launchpad Uganda: Export Readiness Training Manual launch event in Kampala

PROGRAM UPDATES

Africa and Haiti



SME delegation at the International Food and Drinks Event (IFE) in London

Market Access:

TFO Canada in partnership with the Kenya Export Promotion and Branding Agency (KEPROBA), Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA) and Center for Accelerated Women's Economic Empowerment (CAWEE) organised a trade mission to the International Food and Drinks Event (IFE) in London, UK. More than 17 small and medium size enterprises from Kenya, Ghana and Ethiopia exhibited their offerings and participated in B2B meetings from 20-22nd March 2023.

Export Readiness Training Zambia

In collaboration with Zambia Development Agency (ZDA), export readiness training was provided to 122 SMEs, 71 of which are women led. Participants gained valuable insight into the Canadian and other international markets.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Latin America and the Caribbean

Under the framework of the Women in Trade project, The Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) team has been working closely with Trade Support Institutions (TSIs) in Peru, Colombia, and Honduras to pre-select 54 companies (25 women-led) for market access activities.

Working jointly with PROMPERU, 10 SME exporters (8 women-led) were selected and trained to participate in the CPMA 2023 trade show which will take place in Toronto from April 25-27. In addition, in a joint effort with PROCOLOMBIA and Camara De Comercio de Cortes, Honduras, a group of 30 companies (25 women-led) have been assessed to participate in two key market access activities: a Canadian buyer mission to Agromercados Honduras (Tropical and oriental fresh fruits and vegetables) and a virtual exporter mission in the IT services (animation, video game, augmented and virtual reality)

Efforts continued in the implementation of gender action plans. In Peru, TFO Canada published the final version of a gender study in the export sector in partnership with PROMPERU, which provides key information on the current challenges faced by women in the trading sector, whereas, in Guatemala, a survey applied to SMEs will provide information about the characterization of women-led companies and their participation in the trade sector.



Virtual launch of the gender study in the Peruvian export sector in partnership with PROMPERU



Left to Right: H.E Hector Igarza, Ambassador of Cuba in Canada and Mr. Steve Tipman, Executive Director TFO Canada

Signature of a cooperation letter with the Chamber of Commerce of Cuba, March 10, 2023 - Ottawa

TFO Canada Executive Director, Steve Tipman and the President of the Chamber of Commerce of Cuba, Antonio Carricarte, signed a cooperation letter during a virtual ceremony on March 10, 2023. The purpose of the cooperation letter is to create a framework for a long-term partnership that will recognize and foster an ongoing and mutually beneficial relationship between the two organizations. The ceremony was attended by the Ambassador of Cuba in Canada, his excellency Hector Igarza and the Economic and Commercial Counsellor of the Embassy of Cuba, Isaylin Cabanas.

Presentation: Market Entry Study on opportunities for Peruvian Processed Food Products in the Canadian Market, March 7, 2023 - Ottawa

On March 7th and 9th, TFO Canada Associate, Edgar Escudero delivered a Presentation on the results of a Market Entry Study on opportunities for Peruvian Processed Food products in the Canadian Market developed for PROMPERU. The Presentation was delivered during the "PROMO NORTH AMERICA event", a business intelligence platform that provides specialized information on business opportunities offered by the countries of the United States and Canada to Peruvian MSMEs, this event was organized by PROMPERU to support and advice its trade offices in Canada and United States.



Trade Representatives Seminar in Ottawa

Trade Representatives Seminar: "The importance of Digital Technologies for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to successfully access the Canadian market" - February 28, 2023 - Ottawa

TFO Canada organized a seminar for trade representatives in Ottawa on February 28, 2023. The session focused on 'the importance of Digital Technologies for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to successfully access the Canadian market'. Under the guidance and expertise of Arifin Jaigirder, members from the diplomatic community and trade representatives learned and participated actively during the working group session. This initiative was undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada, through Global Affairs Canada.



Members of the Advisory Council Meeting

TFO Canada holds Annual Advisory Council Meeting, March 30th, 2023 - Ottawa

On March 30, 2023, TFO Canada held the Annual Advisory Council Meeting, with the participation of H.E. Fatima Méité, Ambassador of Mali, Ms. Soledad Campos, Senior Trade Commissioner at the Trade Office of Peru, Ms. Quynh Tran, Commercial Counsellor at the Embassy of Vietnam, Ms. Iffah Sa'aidah, Commercial Attaché at the Embassy of Indonesia, Mr. David Arnaud, Economic and commercial Counsellor at the Embassy of Burkina Faso, and Mr.

Abdishakur Hussein, Counsellor/Head of Chancery at the Kenya High Commission. The council reviewed the results of the annual survey of exporters who use our online trade information services. The council provided valuable feedback on how to improve TFO Canada's online services for exporters in developing countries.

Regional Updates

Susan Baka, TFO Canada Ontario Regional Representative

Gift & Home Spring Market Show - Toronto

The end of January was a busy time in Toronto with the Gift & Home Spring Market show taking place at the Congress Centre, along with the newly-created Toronto Market Week featuring fashion, gift, home decor and home goods under one roof at the International Centre. The latter included four shows in one – the Mode Show, SHOW.T.O. Permanent Showrooms, the Gift & Design Wholesale Market and the BYHAND Gift Show.



Trade Representatives Seminar in Toronto

Trade Representatives Seminar: Connecting with Canadian Buyers & Importers - February 21st, 2023 - Toronto

Over 20 participants from developing countries attended TFO Canada's educational session for trade representatives held in Toronto on February 22 to learn about how to connect with Canadian buyers and importers. A multi-sector panel of buyers – representing the home décor/giftware, food and fashion sectors – provided advice and tips on how to get, and keep, their attention and shared trends in their respective industries. The panelists included: Kathryn Hunter, VP, Merchandise, Candym/Canfloyd; Mohan Perera, Founder/CEO, and Keith Perera, Development Manager, M&M Twins Ltd.; and Sheela Agrawal, Founder, Best Bargains Jewellery.

In addition to the panel, Steve Tipman, Executive Director of TFO Canada, gave a presentation on global trends in trade and developments, and Susan Baka, Ontario Regional Trade Representative, shared online resources and directories for identifying importers.

Regional Updates

Jacques Nadeau, TFO Canada Quebec Regional Representative

Trade Representatives Seminar: Marketing Consumer Goods in the Canadian Digital Economy - February 21, 2023 - Montreal

On February 21, 2023, TFO Canada held a conference under the title “Marketing Consumers Goods in the Canadian Digital Economy”. Steve Tipman, TFO Canada’s Executive Director presented TFO Canada’s strategic orientations as well as achievements highlighting the organization’s digital initiatives in Latin America and the priority given to digital technology applied to small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) in years to come.

Mr. Karim Salabi, partner of Ascendis, highlighted the importance of the use of digital in enterprises’ marketing and communication operations and the importance that must be given to the development of “Brands” in an effort to differentiate and increase the competitiveness of products on various markets. Ms. Jennifer Ziliotto, owner of an online fashion store, shared with the audience the importance of using a combination of digital tools, platforms and social media to successfully reach Canadian consumers directly at home. The question period that followed highlighted the importance for exporters in developing and emerging countries to keep up with new ways of doing business in terms of digital marketing, highlighting the need of competent human resources in this area but also the benefits of digital technology that now eliminates the distance factor between foreign exporters and Canadian buyers.

Allison Boulton, TFO Canada British Columbia, Regional Representative

Trade Representatives Seminar: Importing to Canada: A refresher of the basics and an introduction to the new Canada Border Service Agency Assessment and Revenue Management (CARM) system - March 2, 2023 - Vancouver

TFO Canada organized a Trade Representatives Seminar in Vancouver. The topic of the session was ‘Importing to Canada: A refresher of the basics and an introduction to the

new Canada Border Service Agency Assessment and Revenue Management (CARM) system’. Participants gained valuable insight under the guidance of Gloria Terhaar, CCS (CA/US), CTCS, CBSA Prof. designate, Canadian Regulatory Analyst at PCB Customs Brokers. The event was attended by representatives covering 7 countries as well as several community partners like World Trade Centre Vancouver and Latincouver.



Trade Representatives Seminar in Montreal



Trade Representatives Seminar in Vancouver

KALAA ORGANICS: A NEW ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY BRAND



Ranch Tassaout was founded in 2015 by Yasmine and Youssef Benkabbou, a brother sister duo - who decided to realize their dream to produce the best of Moroccan olive oils while reviving the land and restoring biodiversity. In 2021, by adding value to their production, the brand of extra virgin olive oil under the name of Kalaa Organics was created.

In the foothills of the Atlas Mountains and on the bank of the Tassaout River, they planted their grove in the region of Kalaa des Sraghna, an old and renowned area in Morocco for olive production. By working in partnership with the local community, the olives are harvested by hand and pressed within hours under controlled temperature and humidity conditions.

The company has an environmental commitment and aims to be a pioneering project in agroecology for sustainable agriculture. Olive trees are grown from regenerative agriculture to preserve natural resources and promote biodiversity. "We try to respect nature as much as possible on the field, by being organic and not using any chemicals, by encouraging biodiversity on the fields. Sustainability is at the heart of our project," explains Yasmine. Regenerative agriculture has become a key practice to preserve natural resources such as water and to increase the resilience of soils in the face of climate change. The building housing the olive mill was designed to reduce the ecological footprint emissions, by focusing on thermal insulation and rainwater harvesting, and by using local materials.

Last year, Ranch Tassaout was one of the SMEs in the processed food sector chosen to attend the SIAL Montreal trade show from April 20-23, 2022. In collaboration with ITC and trade support institution ASMEX, TFO Canada delivered one-on-one coaching to 13 Moroccan SMEs in the processed food sector, including Ranch Tassaout, in preparation for the event. The training sessions were delivered virtually on Zoom and consisted of imparting knowledge on product pricing, packaging, client relations, and Canadian consumer preferences and standards.

Once at the trade show, great opportunities ensued. "SIAL Montreal was a great event in 2022 We had the opportunity to meet new clients and develop new businesses. We're very thankful to TFO Canada and we're very happy with the experience," comments Yasmine. SIAL Montreal was a showcase to connect with Canadian importers and other international buyers. At SIAL, the company met with a woman owned/led Canadian importer based in Quebec who placed its first order for Kalaa Organics just after SIAL. This was the first exporting experience for Kaala Organics, providing new prospects to access the Canadian and North American markets, particularly in fine gourmet shops in Quebec, where the product has been sold.

SIAL 2022 was an exceptional experience from a marketing perspective. As Yasmine indicated, "SIAL Montreal was our first experience of having a booth at an international trade show. We had to take pictures and prepare all the communication material for the booth, in both English and French. We had good preparation with TFO Canada on how competitive and dynamic the Canadian market is." Yasmine highlighted the support provided by TFO Canada before and during the trade show: "We received a lot of guidance and support from TFO Canada to contact, coordinate, and prepare for the meetings with potential clients."

Kalaa Organics hopes to continue growing sustainably in the coming years by offering new products and accessing and consolidating its international market presence. As Yasmine mentioned, "we're clearly thinking about developing our presence in the Canadian market. We would like to grow and have our brand known in Europe, the US, and Canada. Our goal will be to bring Moroccan excellence to the world and maybe have more products we could offer, with excellent quality."

TFO Canada is pleased to see the implementation of strategies provided during training to SMEs, and to create and strengthen their capacity to access the Canadian and other international markets through trade fair participation. We are committed to gender equality through our work by creating sustainable business partnerships for exporters from developing countries. We would like to thank Yasmine Benkabbou, co-founder and managing partner, for sharing her experiences.

TFO Canada improves lives through the creation of sustainable trade partnerships for exporters from developing countries with Canadian and foreign buyers. We facilitate access to the Canadian marketplace and share Canadian trade expertise for the benefit of smaller male and female owned/managed exporters from developing countries and for the men and women they employ. Founded in 1980, TFO Canada is a non-governmental, non profit organization.



This newsletter is produced with the financial support of the Government of Canada provided through Global Affairs Canada.

© Trade Facilitation Office Canada / Bureau de promotion du commerce Canada 2023