

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Report Highlights:

**Public Consultations on New Voluntary Sodium Levels * Cargill Receives a C\$ 3 million Grant *
CRFA Forecasts Foodservice Sales to Moderate in 2011 * Food Additive Regulation Came into
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Public Consultations on New Voluntary Sodium Levels

Health Canada launched stakeholder consultations on sodium reduction targets and timelines for meeting the targets. The consultation process, which opened on January 7, 2011, **closes on January 31, 2011**. Since a large percentage of the sodium that Canadians consume comes from commercially prepared foods, the focus of the consultations is to reduce sodium levels in prepackaged foods. At this time, the program to reduce sodium in prepackaged foods through established targets is voluntary. However, Health Canada has indicated that it will monitor progress and that stronger measures (such as regulation) could be implemented if the voluntary approach proves unsuccessful. It is estimated that the average Canadian's sodium intake is 3,400 mg per day. The goal of the program is to lower the average Canadian sodium intake to 2,300 mg per day by 2016. These draft targets are presented in a table at the following URL address:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/consult/2011-sodium/append-a-eng.php>

To take part in the consultation process, please go to the following URL-address:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/consult/2011-sodium/consultation-eng.php>

Other useful background documents are located at the following URL addresses:

Development of Sodium Reduction Targets:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/sodium/sodium-reduction-targets-cibles-eng.php>

Sodium Reduction Strategy for Canada:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/sodium/strateg/index-eng.php>

Cargill Receives a C\$ 3 million Grant

At the end of December 2010, the federal government together with the provincial government of Alberta announced a C\$ 3 million grant for Cargill as part of the Growing Forward program. The grant, distributed over two years, will help Cargill improve operational efficiencies at their High River plant and allow them to meet the changing demands and requirements of export shipping. The grant is part of an overall investment of C\$ 42 million by Cargill to modernize their High River plant with new technology to enhance efficiencies, improve food safety and lower overall operating costs. It is estimated that this investment would potentially result in tripling Cargill's beef exports to Asian markets. This Growing Forward funding is administered provincially by the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency (ALMA).

http://www.agr.gc.ca/cb/index_e.php?s1=n&s2=2010&page=n101220

CRFA Forecasts Foodservice Sales to Moderate in 2011

In a recent posting, the Canadian Restaurant and Foodservice Association (CRFA) estimates that slower economic growth and weaker disposable income gains will reduce the pace of foodservice sales growth to 2.8 percent in 2011, following a 3.5 percent increase in 2010. Adjusted for menu inflation of 2.5 percent, real foodservice sales will grow by just 0.3 percent this year. Disposable income in Canada is expected to decelerate to 3.1 percent growth in 2011 from 4.2 percent in 2010. This deceleration, combined with massive consumer debt levels, will likely weaken discretionary spending in the year ahead resulting in modest foodservice sales growth in 2011 for most foodservice segments. According to the CRFA posting, growth in commercial foodservice sales in 2011 will be led by quick-service restaurants (QSRs) and caterers. Cost-conscious spending by consumers will yield a 3.1 percent increase in QSR sales, while caterer sales will expand 3.9 percent due to foodservice growth in health care and educational facilities. Full-service restaurants will trail their quick-service counterparts with a

2.6 percent sales increase. Accommodation foodservice is forecast to lead the industry in 2011 with a 4.7 percent increase in sales. Institutional foodservice sales will grow 3.8 percent due to gains previously mentioned, while retail foodservice sales (convenience, grocery and department stores) will rise 3.1 percent as consumers look for value and convenience.

<http://restaurantcentral.ca/Foodservicesalestomoderatein2011.aspx>

Food Additive Regulation Came into Force

The regulation to permit the use of the food additive *Carnobacterium maltaromaticum* CB1 in certain processed meat and poultry meat products came into force on November 18, 2010. Specifically, the approval permits the use of this food additive in vacuum-packed wieners, vacuum-packed sliced roast beef, vacuum-packed sliced cooked ham and vacuum-packed sliced cooked turkey, all at a maximum level of use consistent with Good Manufacturing Practice:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/compli-conform/gmp-bpf/index-eng.php>

The Food and Drug Regulations (the Regulations) regulate the sale and use of food additives in Canada, listing the permitted food additives and how they may be used. Health Canada received requests from industry for an amendment to the Regulations to permit the use of the food additive *Carnobacterium maltaromaticum* CB1 as a preservative. The Canadian government determined that this amendment benefits both consumers and the industry because it permits the use of a food additive which helps control *Listeria monocytogenes*, a food borne pathogenic micro-organism. The use of food additives is optional and, therefore, a manufacturer choosing to use a food additive in its products voluntarily assumes the costs associated with its use and compliance with the Regulations.

Taste Alberta

In December, two major daily Alberta newspapers, the Edmonton Journal and the Calgary Herald, launched "Taste Alberta." This initiative represents a new series about Alberta food and is a partnership between the newspapers and the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency (ALMA). The series has received a positive initial response. The Taste Alberta editor with the Edmonton Journal said "ALMA and the newspapers aim to capitalize on growing consumer interest in local food with stories and recipes featuring the huge variety of food that is grown, raised, produced and processed in the province." The Taste Alberta series appears weekly in Wednesday's Food section of The Journal and Sunday's Mix section of the Herald. It is also posted online at:

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/life/taste/index.html> and

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/life/taste/index.html>

Exchange Rate: Noon rate, January 13, 2011 (Bank of Canada): U.S. Dollar = C\$ 0.9868