



# News Release

For immediate release

## Harper Government Supports Seafood Exports

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British Columbia's seafood harvesters will receive support to help promote and increase export demand for Canadian Pacific sea urchins and sea cucumber skins and meats to new and emerging markets. Hon. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay, P.C., Q.C., MP for Delta—Richmond East and Minister of National Revenue, on behalf of Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz, today announced an investment of over \$164,000 to the Pacific Sea Cucumber Harvesters Association and the Pacific Urchin Harvesters Association to support their international marketing efforts.

### Quick facts

- Exports of Pacific sea cucumber were valued at \$12 million and \$9.8 million in 2012 and 2013, respectively.
- Exports of Pacific sea urchins were valued at over \$13 million in 2012, with approximately 75% of the harvest exported to Japan.
- These investments are being made through *Growing Forward 2's* AgriMarketing Program (Market Development stream), which aims to build and promote Canada's ability to expand markets at home and abroad.

### Quotes

"Our Government is proud to support these two British Columbia seafood organizations in their efforts to increase their global market share by promoting their products' high quality, safety, nutritional value and sustainability. These industries are generating much needed economic activity in rural and coastal areas."

– *Hon. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay, P.C., Q.C., MP for Delta—Richmond East and Minister of National Revenue*

"The funding provided by AAFC has been, and remains, essential to our efforts to find and obtain the best markets and prices we can for our sea cucumber products. This project has allowed us to grow so we, as Canadian fishermen, processors and exporters, along with many Canadian trade representatives, are working more closely together to deliver better products and services to some of the world's fastest growing seafood markets, namely Hong Kong, the Chinese Mainland, Taiwan, as well as other parts of Asia."

– *Ken Ridgway, President of the PSCHA*



"Canada's dive fisheries are among the most sustainable fisheries in the world and provide a range of high quality products enjoyed by consumers around the world. Production from the BC Red Sea Urchin fishery is exported to many markets and, while Japan remains our largest single export destination, sales to Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Chinese Mainland are on the rise in large part because of our international marketing efforts. Our marketing program is well received thanks to the support provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the AgriMarketing Program. We are proud to be part of the *Growing Forward 2* initiative in presenting the best of Canada to the world."

– *Mike Featherstone, President of the PUHA*

### Additional links

- [Growing Forward 2](#)
- [AgriMarketing Program](#)
- [Pacific Sea Cucumber Harvesters Association](#)
- [Pacific Urchin Harvesters Association](#)

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## BACKGROUND

The Pacific Sea Cucumber Harvester's Association (PSCHA) will receive up to \$69,239 to build the industry's capacity to brand and promote the distinctive properties of Giant Red Sea Cucumber skins and meat harvested in B.C.'s coastal waters. Activities will consist of participation in trade shows and outgoing missions, as well as the development of market research and marketing products.

The Pacific Urchin Harvester's Association (PUHA) will receive up to \$94,826 to expand export markets for Canadian urchins in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the United States, while maintaining the value of sales to its traditional markets in Japan. Activities will include participation in outgoing missions, trade shows, and conducting market research.

B.C. is home to the only commercial fishery of the Giant Red Sea Cucumber within Canada, which is harvested by divers who handpick them off the ocean floor. The skins are recognized and used in traditional Chinese medicine to treat stomach/digestive ailments, while the meat is considered a delicacy in certain Asian markets.

Pacific sea urchins thrive in B.C.'s cold coastal waters and are also handpicked by divers. The meat, called "uni", is a highly valued seafood delicacy, often served as a sashimi item in Japanese cuisine. However, it is currently gaining favour more widely because it has a unique, rich and exotic lusciousness that excites chefs, adventurous foodies and gastronomes the world over.