Introduction
The marketing of underutilized species is a key step in their development. Beothic Fish Processors, established in 1967, operates several fish-processing facilities on the northeast coast of Newfoundland and Labrador. The company, in addition to processing traditional species, has placed considerable effort in the development of underutilized species such as toad and rock crab and whelk.

Background
Beothic Fish Processors had determined that some products from non-traditional species could not compete in traditional North American markets. The toad crab claw is one example of such a product since it is significantly smaller than the snow crab claw. Beothic introduced this product to the Mexican market and identified potential markets in this country of 100 million people. The company had already developed a relationship with a seafood distributor in Mexico, to which it had begun selling toad crab claws in 2000.

Methodology
The company hired a consultant with 20 years' experience in marketing to Latin American countries. This consultant, working from an office supplied by the Mexican distributor, acted as a liaison with the distributor, provided market research, arranged in-store product demonstrations, and traveled throughout the Mexican Republic to meet with prospective buyers.

The consultant and a representative of Beothic Fish Processors met with potential buyers of the products targeted. A variety of products from underutilized species, including rock crab, toad crab and whelk, was introduced to these buyers. Toad crab claws were chosen as having immediate potential. Product demonstration of toad crab claws took place in club-type stores, at which product fact sheets were also distributed.
Results

The market potential for Newfoundland and Labrador seafood, particularly rock crab, toad crab and whelk, appears to be positive. Prices were found to be competitive with other international markets. The main competition was a larger crab claw from a Chilean supplier.

Transportation costs were expensive; however, this could be offset if the volume were to reach container-sized shipments. Mexico has adequate cold storage space available where these larger-sized shipments could be held.

The main areas of concern Beothic Fish Processors identified in developing this market related to financial practices and language barriers. The company found that lengthy delays in various payments appeared to be the norm, and Letters of Credit or similar means of payment security would be required to ensure payment for their product. Their distributor enrolled staff in English classes to help overcome the language difficulties.

The consultant, having experience with the market and familiarity with the product, was an advantage to the company in their attempts to develop this market.

Conclusion

While this project was successful from the perspective of introducing new products to a new marketplace, Beothic Fish Processors has decided not to invest additional resources in this project.

Beothic Fish Processors Ltd, Valleyfield