

Heilongjiang – Alberta Relations

International and
Intergovernmental Relations

Alberta



PROFILE

Capital: Harbin

Population: 38 million
(3% of China's total population)

Major Cities: Harbin (9,743,600);
Qiqihar (5,611,000); Suihua
(5,170,000); Mudanjiang (2,663,000);
Daqing (2,644,000)

Language: Mandarin

Government: Chinese Communist Party

Head of Government: Governor LI
Zhanshu (appointed in 2008) who
represents the executive branch of
government and is responsible to the
Heilongjiang Provincial People's
Congress.

Currency: \$1 CDN = 6.89 Yuan
Renminbi (June 2008)

Key Industry Sectors: Petroleum,
agriculture, coal, lumber, and heavy
industry.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Following the recommendation of China's Ambassador to Canada, a protocol of understanding and friendship was signed by Alberta and Heilongjiang in 1981.
- The year 2006 marked the 25th anniversary of the Heilongjiang-Alberta sister province relationship. The anniversary was celebrated in 2005 with the signing of the reaffirmation of friendship agreement between Alberta and Heilongjiang.
- Heilongjiang is twinned with Hokkaido, Alberta's sister province in Japan.
- In 1985, Edmonton twinned with Harbin, Heilongjiang's capital city, and Calgary entered into a sister city relationship with Daqing.
- Heilongjiang is China's principal oil-producing province.
- Alberta companies have been successful in supplying energy equipment and services to Heilongjiang. In 1998, Sunwing Energy Ltd. of Calgary was the first foreign company to produce oil in China.

RELATIONSHIP OVERVIEW

- Similarities between Alberta and Heilongjiang include climate, topography, energy resources, and agricultural production.
- Mutual areas of interest and exchange include agriculture, energy, forestry, science and technology, medicine, culture, education, sports, and environmental protection.
- In 1998, Heilongjiang suffered its worst flooding in decades. Albertans responded by raising over \$200,000 CDN in private donations. The Alberta government made an additional \$100,000 CDN contribution to flood relief efforts and extended a special scholarship to Heilongjiang for skill development directly related to flood management.
- Over the years, several agricultural cooperation agreements, focused on: livestock improvement, pasture management, beef and dairy cattle genetics technology, food processing research and development, have been signed between Heilongjiang and Alberta.

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

- Alberta's trading relationship with China has more than doubled since 2003. China is Alberta's 2nd largest trading partner. Alberta's longstanding relationship with Heilongjiang has proved valuable for a broad range of joint activities and continuing growth of business opportunities in other areas of China.
- Commercial activities have expanded beyond the petroleum sector and include coal gasification, petrochemical production and manufacturing, breeding cattle, forage seed, hides, and malting barley.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- Alberta has a special agreement with Harbin Institute of Technology (HIT) in promoting technology innovation collaboration. iCore in Alberta and HIT jointly conducted a few computer science related projects, events and exchanges in the past years.
- The Alberta Research Council is working with Heilongjiang Academy of Science on a technology commercialization based project – Integrated Manure Utilization System project (IMUS).

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

- China's accession to the WTO in December 2001 presents significant challenges to Heilongjiang's agrifood sector. As Heilongjiang addresses these challenges, there may be opportunities for additional cooperation between Alberta and Heilongjiang.
- Significant opportunity exists in water quality monitoring (consulting and technology) within China.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

- In 2002, Alberta, Heilongjiang, and the University of Alberta signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Development of a Heilongjiang Executive Training Program. The

program, which began in June 2002, trains Heilongjiang public servants and entrepreneurs.

- There are 40 linkages and agreements between post-secondary institutions in Alberta and China, including Heilongjiang. Areas of cooperation include education, distance learning, engineering, agriculture, management, medicine, and Chinese language studies.
- Each spring and summer, students from the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary study Chinese in Heilongjiang.
- The Royal Alberta Museum has developed strong links with Chinese cultural institutions bringing unique aspects of Chinese culture to Alberta. Examples are the "Black Dragon Rising" exhibits from the Jurchen Jin Dynasty of China and the Qing Dynasty exhibit from Heilongjiang.
- Heilongjiang and Alberta have shared paleontological research expertise.

AGREEMENTS

- In 2006, the Alberta-Harbin Institute of Technology Research and Innovation Centre was established as a partnership between Alberta and the Harbin Institute of Technology to collaborate on computer technology development.
- In 2006, Alberta signed a five-year agreement on comprehensive food safety standards with the Agriculture Committee of Heilongjiang.
- In 2005, Alberta endorsed a five-year agreement on comprehensive value-added agricultural processing (product development, packaging, and marketing) with the Heilongjiang Department of Science and Technology.
- In 2004, Alberta signed an agreement with the Heilongjiang Department of Science and Technology to cooperate on research and technology development.
- Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development signed a joint agreement with Heilongjiang Science and Technology Department to establish a Food Development Centre at August

1st, University in Daqing.

RECENT VISITS

- June 2007: Visit to Alberta by a Heilongjiang agriculture, technology and post-secondary education delegation.
- May 2007: Alberta Advanced Education & Technology Minister led a delegation of industry, academic and government representative to China, including Heilongjiang, to help commercialize Alberta and Chinese technology and develop investment opportunities.
- June 2006: Alberta participated in the International Forum on Food Quality and Safety, China 2006, held in Harbin.
- January 2006: A science and technology mission to Harbin.
- October 2005: An agriculture and food mission to Asia (resulting in the development of two new agreements with Heilongjiang).
- August 2005: Visit by Heilongjiang Governor ZHANG Zuoji to participate in Alberta's Centennial celebrations and to sign the reaffirmation of friendship agreement, marking the 25th anniversary of the Heilongjiang-Alberta twinning.
- June 2005: Alberta mission to Heilongjiang to chair the Northern Forum.
- June 2004: Premier's mission to Heilongjiang. Two agreements were signed to encourage closer ties in the areas of education as well as science and technology.