SERVICE

Mexican buyers of food processing equipment cite quality of service as one of the most important decision factors when making a purchase. To be competitive, a Canadian company's service will have to meet and surpass the standard established by domestic and foreign competition. For food processing and packaging equipment this level of service is very high, both for training and for on-site repairs.

THE REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Few barriers stand in the way of Canadian equipment producers who want to move into Mexico.

STANDARDS

At the present time there are no mandatory standards for food-processing and packaging machinery. However, industry watchers forecast the introduction of approval requirements by the *Dirección General de Normas (DGN)*, Bureau of Standards, that falls under the umbrella of the *Secretaría de Comercio y Fomento Industrial (SECOFI)*, Secretariat of Commerce and Industrial Development.

Products that meet Canadian, European or American standards are unlikely to be the subject of certification problems. Inquiries on Mexican standards can be made with the *DGN* in Mexico City (see the section on Key Contacts in Mexico). Mexican product specifications must be submitted in metric units.

SANITARY AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

The *Secretaría de Salud (SS)*, Secretariat of Health, is working on new regulations for sanitary laws. Unusually stringent standards are not expected. Rather, the Secretariat prefers to place the onus for compliance on the processors themselves. Much equipment sold into Mexico is not easy to clean. This has been cited as a negative by many food processors and health inspectors. Therefore, machinery that is easy to dismantle and clean has a market advantage.

Potentially hazardous equipment such as pressure vessels must be registered and approved by the *Secretaría de Trabajo y Previsión Social (STPS)*, Secretariat of Labour and Social Welfare. The Secretariat will issue a Certificate of Inspection. Compliance with the more stringent American, Canadian and European standards is usually sufficient to ensure certification.