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Foreword

Trading houses have received much recent attention with the release of the Trading House Task Force report, *Promoting Canadian Exports: The Trading House Option* and the formation of the Council of Canadian Trading Houses. Prior to the publication of the Task Force report, little was known in Canada about their role and function. That document, however, brought to light the significant role trading houses play in bringing the products and services of Canadian companies, particularly those of small to medium size, to foreign markets.

In its deliberations, the Task Force also identified areas where improvement could be made to the operating environment in Canada for trading houses. One such area was improving the knowledge of Canadian manufacturers and processors with respect to the services trading houses can provide, how they operate and how to select and work with trading houses. *Export Markets: The Trading House Connection* was published with this objective in mind.

I would like to thank the Council of Canadian Trading Houses for its co-operation in the preparation of this publication and hope that it will provide practical assistance and guidance to Canadian companies seeking to start or increase their exports through trading houses.

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Minister for International Trade

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