

Construction Products

Construction products in this sector include fabricated metal products such as architectural metal products, metal doors and windows, and metal plumbing fixtures as well as non-metallic mineral-based materials such as cement, glass, gypsum wallboard and dimension stone. Similar plastic products are dealt with in *Chemicals and Plastics* while wood-based building products are described in *Forest Industries*.

International Environment

World trade in construction products has grown substantially in the past 10 years in line with increasing economic globalization. Products traded include commodities such as nails, cement, mineral wool insulation, building stone and gypsum wallboard, but individual firms may find niche markets in many diverse specialty product areas.

Canadian Position

Traditionally, construction products manufacturers have concentrated on the domestic market, but the situation is changing with more emphasis being placed on exporting a wide range of products. Canadian exports of metallic and non-metallic mineral based construction products in 1992 were approximately \$1.2 billion of which nearly 85 percent went to the U.S.

In international markets, Canadian construction products are known for their superior quality which, in part, is dictated by the extreme weather conditions experienced in Canada. In markets such as Japan, the prices of Canadian construction materials are very attractive when compared with locally produced products. High transportation costs, trade barriers, and differences in codes and standards in other countries are deterrents to trade, but progress is being made to minimize these constraints.

Strategic Direction

- Industry Canada and DFAIT will facilitate increased trade activity in construction products through the use of market intelligence, trade shows and both incoming and outgoing missions in 1994-95.
- Market development efforts will continue to focus on the U.S.
- Other market development efforts will continue in Japan and Mexico where new Canadian non-wood products were recently introduced.
- Niche opportunities will be sought in Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East and Europe.

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