

**Livestock & Feed**

The live animal and genetic improvement sub-sector is growing rapidly and represents a significant opportunity for Canada. Canadian cattle were sold to Syria in the 1960's and 70's but little has happened since then primarily because no foreign exchange was available for imports. New attempts are now being made by Canadian companies to re-enter the long dormant market which in the interim developed alternate sources of supply. Efforts are being directed mainly at the more quality conscious private sector which is interested in establishing high quality, "model" farms. While most livestock imports will be by state and collective farms, they remain highly priced sensitive and private companies are believed to offer better immediate potential.

New opportunities are also evident in the feed sector; Syria's limited fodder production and storage capacity do not satisfy local demand, resulting in extreme shortages during the summer months. There is heightened interest, again mostly by private sector sources, in establishing feed mills as a result of those chronic shortages.

**Dryland Farming**

Canadian dryland farming technology and other services could provide a definite boost to Syria's agriculture. The best prospects are in the areas of field preparation, planting and harvesting equipment for large scale wheat, vegetable and pulse farming, as well as fodder production for an increasing number of sheep and cattle feedlots. Canadian firms have successfully entered the area of agricultural research and technical services in Jordan through active participation in research programmes such as dryland farming and lentil mechanization. Syria has yet to recognise the full benefits of widespread mechanisation and it will require a committed sales effort to enter the market for everything from rock-pickers to seeders to windrowers and other harvesting equipment.

**Specialty Seeds**

Specialty seeds could capture good market share in Syria, but it will be necessary to penetrate the market through strong introduction incentives and competitive pricing in order to compete effectively with other suppliers, mostly European, who have long dominated the market. Recently, trials of Canadian seed potatoes, sponsored in Syria by Potatoes Canada in order to introduce and register Canadian varieties in Syria, were conducted successfully.

**Food Commodities**

Wheat, more than all cereals, represents the best potential in Syria. While 1992 domestic crop forecasts are the most favourable in the past half decade, the requirements are still large and imports of up to 1.5 million tonnes of soft wheat and flour are projected. Canadian wheat exports to Syria were displaced by European suppliers during the early 1980's due to their ability to offer subsidized wheat and flour with available financing. It is worthwhile to note however that neither the USA or Australia sell wheat to Syria. Recently, the Syrian Government has shown a keen interest in the possibility of future supply of Canadian wheat based on a desire to diversify sources of supply.

**Other Food Products**

Exports of Canadian food products to Syria suffered extensively as a result of the special import quotas imposed on the private sector in 1987. However, the import regime has just been relaxed indicating that Canadian food products such as honey, juices, jellies, oil and oilseed all have excellent chances of recapturing a good share of the Syrian market. A baby food manufacturing project is being considered by private entrepreneurs with an inclination towards Canadian expertise in a joint venture, under licence agreement or technical assistance in addition to the supply of machinery. In 1991, as many as 65 new food processing factories have been established under the new investment law geared towards encouraging private sector participation, a trend which is expected to increase in the future.