Japan accounted for 2.5%. Total imports exceeded $3 billion (U.S.) for all types of furniture. Available import literature is limited to furniture as a whole and does not provide separate data for contract furniture.

The U.S. Department of Commerce expects that the U.S. furniture industry will continue its consolidation from small and medium-sized businesses to large firms that can achieve economies of scale to compete with cheaper imports. U.S. furniture producers are becoming increasingly reliant on more advanced technology (CAD/CAM technology) and greater marketing clout (vertical integration and control of retail outlets) to maintain or expand their market shares.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, manufacturers' shipments of contract furniture have almost doubled since 1981. Exports of wood and non-wood contract furniture accounted for 9% and 10.2% of total shipments for 1984 and 1985, respectively.

This chapter has provided a definition of the products included within the scope of this report, the criteria used for their selection, and a summary of U.S. imports of those products for 1982-87. Where available, a short-term outlook for the corresponding U.S. industry has also been provided. As this report is only intended to provide a sectoral overview and an indication of the opportunities that may exist for increased Canadian exports, individual readers are strongly encouraged to conduct more in-depth research on any potential opportunities identified.

Users of this report who are interested in undertaking further research into specific markets are also encouraged to contact any of the Canadian Government Trade Development offices listed in the final Appendix to this report, to determine what assistance may be available to them.