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## Canada-Mexico Partnership: Increasing trade and investment

As North American countries and partners in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Canada and Mexico have become significant trading partners and close allies. The trade and investment relationship is one of confidence and growth. Canada has developed into Mexico's second-largest



export market, while Mexico is now Canada's fifth-largest export destination. With a young, growing population of more than 100 million, Mexico's economy will offer abundant opportunities for Canada to build upon this already expansive trade and investment relationship. Among other initiatives, the innovative and rapidly-growing Canada-Mexico Partnership is being used to capitalize on these opportunities.

The Canada-Mexico Partnership (CMP) was launched in October 2004, at the same time that the two countries were

celebrating 60 years of diplomatic relations, as well as the 10th anniversary of NAFTA. The main purpose of the partnership is to enhance relationships between the two countries and to further cooperation in a broad range of priority areas. These include public-private sector partnerships, business-to-business links, bilateral investment, good governance practices, education, institutional reforms and citizen-focused government. These priorities have formed a rich basis for dialogue and cooperation, as demonstrated by the successes achieved in the first year of the Partnership.

The first CMP Report to Leaders was released on September 30, 2005, during the visit to Canada of Mexican President Vicente Fox. The report highlights key accomplishments by the Partnership's working groups on competitiveness, human capital and urban development and housing. Each working group has been organised to bring together business leaders, key economic actors and senior policy makers, and

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## FDA compliance seminars for Quebec and Ontario companies

**Buffalo, New York >** The Buffalo District of the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Canadian Consulate General in Buffalo recently co-sponsored the annual educational export seminar for Quebec companies, organized through the Plattsburgh-North Country Chamber of Commerce and held in Plattsburgh last October. On March 8, 2006, a similar event will be held in Burlington (ON) for Ontario companies.

The objective of the seminars is to assure that imported foods comply with U.S. laws and regulations by educating the import community and achieving voluntary compliance, whenever possible. The ultimate goal is to speed up the import process for all involved, which should result in a

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