

III. ASSESSMENTS OF FREER TRADE

To establish the context for specific assessments of free trade, respondents were asked how important a trading partner Canada is to the United States. Fully 57% consider Canada to be an important partner to the United States, a level unchanged since April of 1986. Quebec residents are the least likely to attach very great importance to Canada's role. On the other hand, residents in British Columbia are more apt to value the Canadian importance to the American trade picture more highly (+7).

A. Winners and Losers

Respondents were then asked a series of questions to determine overall perceptions of who would win and who would lose in the event trade barriers for goods and services over the border were removed. Since April the overall belief among 55% of all Canadians has consistently been that the country will benefit from any free trade agreement with the United States. The following table profiles regional variations in perceptions of benefits or losses to Canada.