

PACKING YOUR GOODS

Proper packing and marking is necessary for goods entering foreign markets. In selecting the appropriate packing method, the following factors should be considered:

- Some types of goods being exported are at risk of damage during handling, in transit or in storage, so they may require special temperature control or protection.
- The type of carrier used to ship the product may determine the kind of packing to use. If the goods are carried by ship, you need to know whether they will be placed above or below deck.
- Adverse weather conditions may be experienced in transit — extreme temperatures can damage many types of products.
- At port and handling facilities as well as during transit, cargoes may be handled roughly and should be packed with extra care.
- Protection against theft during transit can be increased through proper packing, and the risk of pilferage can be similarly reduced.

MARKING YOUR GOODS

Marking containers identifies your goods in relation to those of other shippers. Marks shown on the shipping container(s) must conform to those on the commercial invoice/bill of lading, and may include some or all of these items:

- buyer's name or some other form of agreed identification;
- point/port of entry into the importing country;
- gross and net weights in kilograms and pounds;
- identification of the country of origin, i.e. "Made in Canada";
- number of packages for shipments of more than one container;

- warning/cautionary markings, if necessary;
- the packing list, plus one copy in each container, itemizing the contents.

LABELLING YOUR GOODS

Beyond marking the container, you may also have to provide your products with labels suited to the target market. Product labelling is no trivial matter — your goods may not be admitted into the country of destination unless labels conform to all local requirements.

These requirements may include some or all of the following:

- use of local language;
- name of country where product was made or manufactured;
- name of producer or shipper;
- product details such as weight, ingredients, etc. (for foodstuffs);
- type of fibre and instructions for use (for clothing);
- technical specifications (for machinery and equipment);
- certification of conformity to local technical standards (for appliances, etc.).

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

If you already have patent or copyright protection for your product in Canada or if you're planning to get it, you should consider seeking similar protection under the patent law of your target market. Similar care should also be taken with brand names and registered trademarks.

Patent and intellectual property law is complex. If you think you need this kind of protection or if you want to make sure your product complies with foreign patent laws, you should consider retaining professional legal counsel.