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For Canadian firms seeking new markets at home or in other countries, extensive programs exist to provide basic information and resources needed to penetrate new markets effectively. Programs exist to identify Canadian markets that local firms can win over from foreign suppliers. The Import Analysis Service of the Department of Regional Industrial Expansion provides Canadian firms with detailed information on the value, volume and physical nature of particular products imported into Canada. Programs also exist that identify foreign markets that Canadian firms can serve. The Trade Commissioner service provided by the Department of External Affairs helps Canadian business penetrate foreign markets. The Departments of External Affairs and Regional Industrial Expansion manage the Program for Export Market Development which helps defray the costs incurred by Canadian companies in developing foreign markets. Win Exports is a computer-based inventory of the names and products of potential Canadian suppliers that is made available to U.S. and other foreign buyers.

A broad range of government programs is available to help business in the area of science and technology, including INNOVATION, a new federal government strategy to promote innovation and technology transfer by Canadian firms, various tax incentives, financial assistance for research and development and demonstration projects, scientific and technical information, training activities, and procurement policies, among others.

The Interfirm Comparison Program, managed by the Department of Regional Industrial Expansion, is a diagnostic service that identifies a participant's strengths and weaknesses and helps participants improve their performance in areas such as cost control, investment, rationalization and marketing.

New mechanisms for promoting regional economic development — the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Federal Economic Development Initiative in Northern Ontario and Western Economic Diversification — are designed to help industry in these regions meet a range of business challenges.

An Advisory Council on Adjustment, composed of representatives from business and labour organizations and the academic community, has been established to advise the government whether modifications to existing programs are required in order to ensure that Canadian workers and businesses are able to take full advantage of the new opportunities provided by the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement.