

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCTS

There are opportunities for Canadian companies in the provision of both commodity and specialty chemicals. Specialty chemicals appear to be the best prospects for small- to medium-sized Canadian producers. They involve higher value added, are profitable at lower volumes, and competition tends to be based more on service than price.

The Mexican market for specialty chemicals is difficult to assess, because it is not recognized as a subsector in the available statistics. In Mexico, responsibility for the collection of industry statistics falls mainly on the industry associations. Membership in an appropriate industry association is required by law, and in return the associations monitor industry conditions. The *Asociación Nacional de la Industria Química (ANIQ)*, National Association of the Chemical Industry, produces statistics that are excellent compared with those in many other industries. But it does not include specialty chemicals as a separate category in its statistics.

Industry observers say that there are opportunities for imports of specialty chemicals used in Mexico in the manufacture of a wide variety of products:

- plastics
- paints
- detergents and cleaning products
- cosmetics
- chemicals for water treatment
- agricultural products
- pulp and paper
- adhesives
- emulsions
- starches
- lubricators
- pharmaceutical products
- foods

ANIQ officials noted that statistical information regarding specific specialty chemicals is very poor. One problem is the difficulty in providing precise chemical names in English. The association is seeking to develop figures within the next 12 months in cooperation with the *Cámara Nacional de la Industria de la Transformación (Canacindra)*, National Chamber of Manufacturing Industries.