



Progress to Bring Down Barriers

Canada's strong export performance in recent years has been due in large part to governments' pursuit of policies that improve access to the United States and other foreign markets, and that promote the continuous improvement and expanded coverage of international rules governing trade and investment.

Canada has been remarkably successful over the last decade in pursuing these goals. Negotiation of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the creation of the WTO, have provided an enhanced rules-based framework to facilitate trade and investment. In addition, Canada is expanding trade liberalization and pursuing its market access priorities through complementary initiatives such as the APEC forum, the FTAA, the *Canada-EU Action Plan*, the recent bilateral free trade agreements with Chile and Israel, and discussions with EFTA countries about a possible Canada-EFTA FTA. Throughout all of these initiatives, Canada works to increase access to markets in a manner that promotes Canadian values, including respect for the environment and labour standards.

Market Access and Trade and Investment Promotion

Expanding international trade and investment is a vital element of the federal government's strategy to promote jobs, growth and prosperity. The government's international business development program, including the highly successful Team Canada trade missions abroad, encourages Canadian traders and investors, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, to take full advantage of international opportunities. The recent creation of Team Canada Inc is designed to enhance horizontal management through a single, integrated business plan and regular meetings across the three core international business development departments: the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), Industry Canada, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

The Government's concerted efforts to enhance access to foreign markets, go hand-in-hand with the export and investment marketing activities presented in Canada's International Business Strategy (CIBS).

For instance, DFAIT's new Global Opportunities (GO) Teams of Trade Commissioners are dispatched to liberalizing markets (e.g. Mexico and Chile) to exploit these connections. In addition, the positioning of additional Trade Commissioners in emerging, priority markets helps Canadian traders and investors get the most out of market access openings.

We'd Like to Hear from Canadians Doing Business Abroad

The federal government consults industry on market access issues through the newly formed Team Canada Inc Advisory Board, which provides both market development and trade policy advice. This body engages the business community more directly, and complements the various Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGITs). We also welcome direct input from Canadian exporters and investors describing barriers they have encountered in foreign markets. Individuals, companies, industry associations and organizations are encouraged to contact DFAIT with specific information on tariff or non-tariff barriers and other business irritants. Business people frequently alert Canadian Trade Commissioners and other DFAIT staff (such as agri-food or investment specialists based in markets around the world) to situations requiring local advocacy or troubleshooting. Often, these problems are reported to DFAIT headquarters for particular consideration from an overall market access perspective. Business people are invited to report problems they are experiencing by communicating in strictest confidence to:

"Foreign Trade and Investment Barriers Alert"
Department of Foreign Affairs
and International Trade
125 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G2
Fax: (613) 992-6002
e-mail: eat.extott@extott14.x400.gc.ca

Business people are also encouraged to remain in touch with the Department on market access and other issues through its Web sites at www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca or www.exportsource.gc.ca. These sites contain additional information on many of the issues covered in this document.