

Imports of plastic resins have played an important role in the Mexican market, but have been gradually substituted by domestic production, as can be noted in the preceding chart. However this is mostly as a result of the decrease in imports of low-density polyethylene (from 170 million tons in 1981 to only 23 million in 1987), and which is now produced in Mexico by PEMEX, the national oil monopoly. The importation of other resins, on the other hand, has increased 80% since 1982 particularly in specialty and engineering resins, polypropylene and high density polyethylene. However plastic resin imports are expected to increase, and by 1992 it is estimated should reach some US\$514 million dollars representing an average 8% annual growth rate. Engineering resins, usually produced in low volume at higher cost than commodity resins are particularly sought in Mexico. These are still imported due to their technologically more advanced production process, and production volume is still too low to justify domestic production. Engineering resins used in Mexico include: ABS, PBT, polycarbonate, polyacetal resins, nylon, fluoropolymers, polyamide, polyesters, polyurethanes, epoxy resins, unsaturated polyester, alloys and blends. This area is particularly attractive for companies interested in selling or expanding their operations in Mexico. Additives for plastics has become very important to the plastics industry and currently Mexico relies entirely on imports to satisfy local demand. Some of these products include coupling agents such as titanates, silanes, and zirconates, pigments, perfuming and flavoring agents, impact and flow modifiers, stabilizers of ultraviolet light, heat and flame retardants, preservatives and anti-static and anti-smoke agents. The United States is by far the largest supplier of plastic resins to Mexico, enjoying an 80% market share. While the United States still holds a dominant position as supplier to Mexico, third country suppliers including West Germany, Italy and Japan are aggressively marketing their products in Mexico.

Some of the largest suppliers of plastic resins to Mexico both local (domestic factory facilities) and foreign, include AMOCO, BASF, BAYER, BF GOODRICH, BORDEN, BORG-WAGNER, CELANESE, CHEVRON, CIBA-GEIGY, CYANAMID, DAYTON, DOW, DUPONT, EGC, FULLER, HERCULES, HIMONT, K.J. QUINN, MOBIL POLYMERS, MONSANTO, PHILLIPS, PLEXCHEM, POLIMER, POLIMEROS DE MEXICO, PEMEX, POLYCID, REICHHOLD, RESISTOL, ROHM AND HAAS, SHELL AND SIMON.