

## PACKAGING

Labelling defines what information must go on the product label of each individual item sold in retail stores. Packaging describes what information must be included on the container or package if it is to be transported into Mexico.

Marking containers also identifies a firm's goods in relation to the cargoes of other shippers. Marks shown on the shipping containers must conform to those shown on the commercial invoice and/or bill of lading. Markings required include the following:

- buyer's name or some other form of agreed-upon identification;
- point and/or port of entry;
- gross and net weights in kilograms;
- identification of the country of origin;
- package numbers (required for shipments consisting of more than one container);
- warnings and/or cautionary markings, if necessary; and
- the packing list, plus one copy in each container, itemizing its contents.

**If a firm has little experience in exporting and shipping, it is advisable to have export packing and marking done by a freight forwarder.** Larger firms will have the infrastructure and the experience to make these arrangements on their own. Smaller firms and those that export infrequently may engage the services of a freight forwarder or an export house. A freight forwarder will handle all of the logistics involved in taking a product from a producer's factory to a buyer's receiving dock.

An export house can actually assume all of the functions performed by an export sales office in larger firms, taking orders, processing them, arranging for shipments and invoicing the buyer.

Proper packing and marking is necessary for all goods being shipped to Mexico. Merchandise shipped via ocean or regular air freight is susceptible to damage and loss. In selecting the appropriate packing method, several factors must be considered:

- The type of goods being exported. Are they at risk of damage during handling, in transit or in storage? Do they require special temperature control or protection while being shipped and/or in storage?
- The carrier used to ship the product. Packing can be affected by the mode of transport chosen. For goods carried by ship, it is important to know whether they will be placed above or below deck.